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Tuesday, 23 November 1993 at 10 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana)

Vice-President: Mr. MARTINI HERRERA (Guatemala)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 33

QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL:

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/48/264 and Add.1, Add.2 and Add.2/Corr.1, Add.3 and Add.4)

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the first speaker I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed today at noon. If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inscribe their names on the list as soon as possible.

Mr. SHAHEED: (Syrian Arab Republic) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: Since the old world order has ended, the management of that old order should end as well. If there really is a new world order, it stands in need of a new management. The Security Council as it stands no longer reflects the new realities of the international situation. Rather, it reflects the realities of the international situation that prevailed at the end of World War II. The world that has taken shape over the decades from the end of World War II to the end of the cold war is a much changed world. The United Nations itself has changed. Its membership is four times greater than it was when it was established.

That is the reason why many speakers in the general debate at the beginning of this session spoke of the need to review the membership of the Security Council so as to enable the Council to play a decisive role that would be consonant with its mandate under the United Nations Charter. Such a goal would be achieved through an equitable increase in the membership of the Security Council and a comprehensive review of the Council's procedures and decision-making process.

The Foreign Minister of my country stated at the beginning of the session that:

> "In this context, we find no better framework than the United Nations to promote international dialogue and cooperation. In order for such dialogue to have positive and fruitful results in the interest of all concerned, it is necessary to introduce democratic reforms that would restructure the decision-making process in the Organization so that it may reflect the views of the majority. It is not reasonable, for instance, to allow the United Nations machinery to be manipulated, sometimes, in order to intervene in the internal affairs of countries under one pretext or another, before the Member States themselves are given the chance to introduce the necessary reforms that would restructure the United Nations in such a way as to guarantee equitable representation in its main organs and prevent the use of selectivity and double standards in addressing the issues that are of

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vital importance to Member States." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 14th meeting, p. 18)*

An increase in the membership of the Security Council would enhance its effectiveness and better enable it to discharge its principle responsibility under the Charter, namely the maintenance of international peace and security. It would also enable the Council to conduct more democratic and significant discussions on important issues in an equitable and just manner and would ensure that the resolutions adopted by the Council express, genuinely, the will of the international community and thus enhance the legality of its actions and encourage acquiescence in its resolutions.

There is no doubt that an equitable increase in the membership of the Security Council, whose work has been hampered in general by the actions of its permanent members over the past decades, would not in any way hamper its work or make it less effective. Rather, such an equitable increase would increase the ability of the Security Council to reflect more effectively the concerns of the Organization's membership which, at present, stands at 184 States, most of which are developing countries that have the will and the ability to participate in the maintenance of international peace and security through peace-keeping and other activities of the United Nations. That is the reason why those Member States should be given access to the permanent membership of the Security Council. This could be done by adding one permanent member to represent each developing region. For example, a permanent seat could be given to the Arab Group in the Security Council, with all the attendant powers. That seat would be rotated in a manner to be decided within the framework of the Arab Group. Giving one permanent seat to the Arab Group will certainly enable the Arab countries to play a role that would contribute effectively to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Security Council, as it stands, continues to be one of the least democratically representative organs of the United Nations. This stems from unequal geographical representation in the Security Council and from the exercise by its permanent members of the power of veto which, in itself, is an anachronism. It is also undemocratic and runs counter to the fundamental principle of equal rights and obligations for all the Members of the United Nations. That is the reason why the Non-Aligned Movement has continued to underscore the need to democratize international relations, in other words to ensure greater participation in the decision-making process.

Accordingly, my delegation believes that consideration should be given to the restructuring of the Security Council and that such restructuring should not be limited, this time, to a simple increase in membership but should include a comprehensive review of the Council's procedures and decision-making process.

The veto power was instituted in response to realities and situations that no longer obtain. A number of delegations are of the view that the veto is now non-existent in practice, as it has not been exercised of late regardless of the fact that there are numerous international crises. However, the fact that it has not been used of late is no guarantee that it will not be used again. Therefore, we must abolish the right of veto if possible or, at least, restrict its use, especially that since the Council was established, the exercise of the veto has been used with the purpose of imposing solutions that reflected the interests of the permanent members of the Security Council. This has proved to be obstructive to the performance of the Council's paramount role, namely the maintenance of international peace and security.

Here we must mention the efforts of some permanent members to broaden the scope of the Council's tasks and activities in a manner that oversteps, in certain cases, the provisions of the Charter and, in others infringes upon the mandates of other United Nations organs. This has called into question, in some instances, the legality of the Council's measures. Moreover, some Members of the Organization have the feeling that the Council tends to act with alacrity when it addresses issues that involve direct interests of its permanent members. For that reason, we must stress the need for the Council's role to be consonant with its mandate as set out in the Charter so that there may not be any infringement on the competence and authority of the General Assembly and its subsidiary organs.

The Council's procedures and its relations with other bodies have hardly changed since the Council was established nearly half a century ago. Even today, the Security Council acts in accordance with provisional rules of procedure; my delegation thinks it is time permanent rules of procedure were adopted. Currently, Council procedures depend largely on the five permanent members, who try in various ways to dominate the activities of the Council, and on closed informal consultations which have become a daily practice, almost a ritual.

These consultations deprive non-members of the Security Council of the opportunity to take part in the discussions that lead to the adoption of resolutions. Also, the way in which Council meetings are announced makes it difficult for non-members to cover the meetings, especially those that are convened following informal consultations. In this respect, it is worth noting that the Council has only recently adopted the practice of

announcing its agenda in the *Journal* in advance of its meetings, as the General Assembly does.

These facts show that the Council's work is somewhat lacking in transparency. As media coverage of the Council's activities is very important in explaining the work of the United Nations to world public opinion, we believe a Security Council spokesman should be appointed to facilitate such coverage. Greater transparency would certainly enhance the Council's credibility.

The Council should also appoint a special rapporteur to handle relations with the General Assembly; the Assembly's role *vis-à-vis* the Council has been, and continues to be, limited to receiving a report on the Council's work. We believe that that report should be more detailed and more analytical so that it may truly inform the States Members of the Organization concerning all that is adopted in their name.

Change is not an end in itself. It is the indispensable means of ensuring that the Council adapts to a changing world. The need for carrying out the necessary reforms in the Council is clearly reflected in resolution 47/62, which was adopted by consensus.

The present international situation; the increased membership of the United Nations; the need to ensure respect for the principles of equality and of sovereignty, democracy and transparency in decision-making: all these considerations make it imperative to review the current composition of the Security Council, which, as I have said, no longer corresponds to international realities. The Council must be enabled to play its role in the new international climate in which there is a lot of talk of an interdependent world wherein participation in decision-making is a fundamental right of all States.

Mr. SOMAVIA (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Today the General Assembly begins its consideration of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. We all know that this question is crucial for the future of the United Nations. It is not a matter of merely discussing the practical aspects of increasing the Council's membership, but of stating our views on the role the Security Council should play - and the role it should not play - in the post-cold-war world: both dimensions of the question are essential.

The great importance of this issue was seen during this session's general debate, during which nearly all Heads of State and Ministers for Foreign Affairs made reference to it.

It has been said many times in this Hall that the current changes on the international scene are exceptional in their profundity, in their content and in their swiftness. That is certainly true, and the United Nations cannot ignore those changes. Adapting to the international community's present needs makes reform an imperative duty.

The Security Council is static in its structures and hyperactive in its decisions, a formula fraught with danger.

Chile believes that such major reforms must involve broad, solid political agreement reflecting the will of the majority of States. In that consensus, the support of the five permanent members of the Security Council will be indispensable.

We welcome and fully agree with the view the Secretary-General expressed in his report on the work of the Organization, that

> "The question of the Security Council's membership structure is of crucial importance, and I look forward to the issue being resolved by the time of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization". *(A/48/1, para. 40)*

My Government considers that in restructuring the Council we must focus particularly on strengthening the effectiveness, representativity and legitimacy of its work.

We share the view that change in the Security Council must reflect present international realities through the inclusion of new world Powers as members. Their inclusion must indicate a genuine, resolute commitment to the delicate task of the maintenance of international peace and security.

It is thus essential that the Security Council, which acts on behalf of all the Members of the Organization, pursuant to Article 24 of the Charter, should have a membership that reflects adequately the increase in the membership of the Organization, and also its regional, political, cultural and religious diversity. This increase in the membership of the Security Council, which should ensure better and more appropriate representation of all the Member States, should not affect the effectiveness and, when relevant, the speed of the decision-making process in this vital organ of the United Nations system.

With regard to the veto power, Chile believes as a matter of principle that the veto is not a democratic mechanism. Nevertheless, we believe that, for the time being, reform of the veto power is not viable. We recognize that the Council's work Council has been facilitated by the climate of improved cooperation and political consensus which has prevailed in this new phase

of international relations, one very positive result of which has been the limited use of the veto power.

On the basis of that experience, we could perhaps explore formulas that could regulate the use of the veto power in future. For example, I think it would be possible for the five Powers that have the veto power in the Security Council to undertake voluntarily, in a great democratic gesture, to renounce its use in one crucial and symbolic decision of the Organization: the election of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. This would indeed be a great democratic gesture on the part of the five Powers.

The report of the Secretary-General (A/48/264 and Add.1-4) contains comments submitted by 75 Member States on this issue. An analysis of those comments shows that there is a clear consensus in the international community on the unavoidable need to proceed as soon as possible to reform the present structures of the Security Council.

In the light of what we have just said, and in order to attain the established objectives, Chile has made the following specific suggestions which should be considered in any reform of the Security Council.

The Security Council should be made up of no more than 25 members, which could be grouped into four categories: permanent members; permanent members without the veto power; regional members serving a long term of office; and non-permanent members.

The first category - the group of permanent members with the veto power - would be those States which have this right in the Council today.

The second category would be two new permanent members without the veto power; it would include nations that today have a real capacity to make a substantial contribution to the Council's work, given their economic and political potential: I refer to Japan and Germany.

The third category would be regional members serving a long term of office. These would be States from the developing world which, because of their specific importance, could regularly join the Council as representatives of their regions or subregions, and they too would not have the veto power. These regional representatives serving a long term of office would be members for longer periods than the non-permanent members and would be eligible for immediate re-election. Thus the length of time a country would be a member of the Council would depend on the will of each region. Depending on the outcome of this experiment, it would be possible for regional groups to decide to request that some of their members be placed in the category of permanent members without the veto power. The modalities for this category of membership would certainly require deep, detailed study, and we are prepared to consider what other States may have to suggest in this respect.

The final category, that of non-permanent members, would be members elected in the same way as the current non-permanent members are elected; in other words, there would equitable geographical distribution and they would serve a two-year term and could not be re-elected.

All this would make it possible better to meet and to reconcile individual and regional aspirations, and it would at the same time ensure a balance in the Security Council's membership, deliberations and decision-making process.

We believe that any process of reform would be incomplete if it did not include two elements that we regard as vitally important - that is, the need for transparency in decision-making in the Security Council, and for information relating to its work to be provided to the other organs in the system, particularly the General Assembly. For some time now, various Member States have been repeatedly expressing this idea. They have done so both in comments submitted to the Secretary-General and in statements made in the general debate at this session. We are glad that some of the suggestions made have been taken into consideration and have been applied by the Security Council in the last few months. In particular, we would like to highlight the symbolic and political gesture by the Ambassador of Brazil, His Excellency, Mr. Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg, when, as President of the Security Council, he personally presented the Council's report (A/48/2) to the General Assembly this year. Much remains to be done, however, and this is a good opportunity to discuss some practical measures that could be taken.

The current era of greater cooperation between the major Powers has enabled the Security Council to work intensively in support of international peace and security by adopting a far larger number of resolutions and presidential statements than in the past. Also, decisions have been taken more frequently to establish peace-keeping operations in various parts of the world, which means that today thousands of men and women are making a valuable contribution as part of these operations.

We welcome the reactivation of this organ of the United Nations, but at the same time we have to exercise prudence in analysing the road to be travelled in future and the real means - political, material and organizational - available to the Organization for the effective

implementation of its resolutions. There is nothing that so weakens the United Nations as the inability of the Security Council to ensure that its own decisions are implemented. We have to study much more carefully the commendable goals sought as compared to the real means available to attain them.

The Security Council has to find the right road, somewhere between the immobility of the past and the activism of the present, so that it can responsibly carry out its paramount work of maintaining international peace and security. We know that this is difficult. We know that those who are the victims of the various crises in the world hope that the United Nations will be able to do something for them. We know that after each decision by the Security Council there are countries that legitimately feel it essential that action be taken - and taken quickly and effectively. There are of course many recent successes that deserve our commendation and support. But we also know that the Organization is not adequately prepared to carry out this work. It is proceeding along a road that is heavily mined, and there have already been enough explosions for us to understand that the image and credibility of the United Nations as a whole, and not only the Security Council, are being negatively affected.

If we recall the preamble to the Charter, we have to conclude that it cannot be the destiny of the United Nations to become the post-cold-war policeman of the world; unfortunately, that is the image it has been giving recently.

If we are to identify clearly what tasks the Security Council will have in the future, we must understand that the very concept of security needs to be broadened.

The principal sources of instability in the world are social tensions that regularly erupt before our very eyes in various regions of the world. We have replaced the danger of the nuclear bomb with the reality of the "social bomb".

Today, the greatest, the most powerful and the most extensive insecurity is that of individuals and is caused by the lack of respect for the dignity of the human being. The insecurities experienced by people in their daily lives are called poverty; unemployment; violence in the home, on the streets and in politics; social disintegration; and a broad sense of being excluded, marginalized and discriminated against. If we really wish to ensure international peace and security, we must first adopt preventive solutions to these problems, for they are very often the direct origin of the open conflicts that the Security Council must take up at a later time.

The main challenge before the United Nations today is to help strengthen human security in all our societies. The United Nations must be able to give political priority to the lives of the humble and dispossessed.

If we look at things this way, it is clear that, except for certain humanitarian emergency situations, the Security Council does not have the instruments to solve the major problems generated by social tensions. Social and economic problems cannot be solved with troops, sanctions or mandatory measures. They can be solved only with development - economic development, social development, cultural development, the development of knowledge and the imagination, and the improvement of peoples' living conditions.

For all our societies, development is the main antidote to insecurity. In the deepest sense, development is the authentic preventive diplomacy for our age. This point of view is not difficult to grasp intellectually, but it has practical implications of great significance. It means that these security problems cannot be taken up by the Security Council because it does not have the mandate or the instruments to solve them. These are matters that legitimately belong to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the specialized agencies and programmes, and the international financial and trade bodies.

Thus, we believe that the practice of imposing enforcement measures under Chapter VII of the Charter has been used far too often in circumstances in which many problems might in time have been solved under the provisions of Chapter VI relating to the peaceful settlement of disputes. Furthermore, the high cost of these operations seriously affects the financial and human resources available to the Organization. It also endangers the implementation of plans and programmes for economic, social and humanitarian assistance and cooperation, which are among the guiding principles of the United Nations.

Chile is ready to contribute actively - as we are now doing - to the quest for the broadest and most solid political consensus that could lead to the successful conclusion of the consideration of the item entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council". Obviously, this should take due account of the interests of the Member States and the various regional groups that make up our Organization.

In conclusion, nothing I have said in any way mitigates Chile's commitment to the central role of the Security Council. We want more transparency; we want greater effectiveness; we want more prudence. But we also

want to continue participating in peace operations that we find appropriate and that are designed, in general, to strengthen the Organization's responsibility for maintaining the peace.

Mr. CHEW (Singapore): When my Foreign Minister, Mr. Wong Kan Seng, addressed the General Assembly on 6 October, he analysed the need for and the possible objectives of Security Council reforms in an approach which anticipated the problems likely to arise. We have already seen some of these problems, which have emerged in informal discussions on the draft resolution recommending the establishment of an open-ended working group to consider all aspects of the question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council. These problems are associated with the issues of a narrow versus a broad mandate for the working group to consider the Council reform exercise. Looking slightly ahead, we can foresee that all issues, including the basis or criteria for selecting any new members, will need to be adequately addressed in the open-ended working group's discussions in 1994.

My delegation would like to stress that our approach to the issue of Council reform is based on the premise that this exercise is conducted for the general benefit of the entire membership. This is a fair and balanced approach. It implies that all United Nations Members should engage themselves in this issue with a certain degree of broad-mindedness, a spirit of compromise and a willingness to work towards consensus. While each Member State has to protect its national objectives and interests, this approach needs to include an appreciation for the broader interests of the United Nations and of the general membership. To insist strictly and inflexibly on discussing only some issues and not others is a sure recipe for paralysis. That is why we prefer a path that would allow for the consideration of all matters related to the Security Council. In our view, the discussions must necessarily examine the increase of membership as well as other matters related to the Security Council, such as the effective and efficient functioning of the Security Council and the Council's relations with other organs of the United Nations.

My delegation approaches the Council reform exercise from three perspectives. First, we address the need for global leadership to tackle the problems that will confront the United Nations in the immediate future. There is no doubt that the United Nations should continue to provide the necessary global leadership in the post-cold-war world. After all, the United Nations remains the only global Organization charged with the maintenance of international peace and security. In turn, the ability of the United Nations effectively to address international peace and security issues must come from a strong and efficient Security Council, the core of which remains the permanent members.

What then must be the obligations of permanent members of the Security Council in the next few decades? Our view is that with the privilege of permanent status must come permanent responsibility for global leadership and the financial and material burdens that come with that task. Privileges and responsibilities go hand in hand.

At the San Francisco Conference in 1945, Mexico proposed that the distinction between permanent and non-permanent members should be made clear. Mexico pointed out that the privileged position of the permanent members should be based solely on the juridical principle that more extensive rights are granted to those States that have the heaviest obligations. Mexico proposed that the phrase "as the States that have the greatest responsibility for the maintenance of peace" be added to qualify permanent Council seats. This laudable proposal was, however, not taken on board, although in practice the five permanent members have generally accepted this added responsibility.

The example illustrates how difficult the issue of permanent membership was in 1945, and how difficult it remains some 50 years later. The responsibilities of the members of the Security Council, particularly its permanent members, will have to be carefully examined and defined in the light of the new international situation.

My delegation supports the idea that, since the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, its permanent members should meet certain conditions, fulfil certain responsibilities and take on heavier obligations. Only those countries which agree to accept such obligations, to make the United Nations more effective in the post-cold-war era, should be considered for the privileged status of permanent membership.

Some of the criteria for permanent membership have already been spelt out by my Foreign Minister in his statement to this Assembly. I shall not repeat them here. Some additional criteria for permanent membership are, firstly, that a permanent member should have a long-established tradition of conducting itself in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, particularly in settling international disputes by peaceful means and refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

Secondly, a permanent member must have the will and capacity to place military as well as civilian and material resources at the disposal of the United Nations in the event of a crisis.

Thirdly, a permanent member should have a good track record of contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security. It should also demonstrate that it is a responsible and constructive Member of the United Nations by substantively contributing to other aspects of the Organization's activities, including, *inter alia*, enhancing and supporting international economic and social cooperation and providing substantial assistance to developing countries.

Last but not least, an aspirant for permanent membership should be elected only with the support or consensus of all Members of the United Nations. This is to distinguish its election from the election of non-permanent members, which requires only a two-thirds majority.

Small States, by any definition, comprise the majority of the United Nations membership. The issue of Council reform must therefore also be viewed from the perspective of small States. Small States are vulnerable and sensitive to threats to their political and socio-economic well-being. Small States therefore have an intrinsic interest in ensuring an effective and responsive Security Council that has the primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security. Secondly, small States should ensure that the instruments for maintaining international peace and security - namely, United Nations peace-keeping, peacemaking and preventive diplomacy - function effectively and efficiently and are well organized. Otherwise, these instruments will become a burden on the international community, and when they are really needed, as in cases of the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of States, the international community might not then have the will or resources to deter such aggression.

In sum, the Security Council must function effectively and efficiently. This, we stress, should be the main guiding principle in the Security Council reform exercise, more so than mere size and representativeness.

Our third perspective is to ask what kind of problems the United Nations will face in the future. Some of the problems have already begun to emerge; these are the problems of underdevelopment, overpopulation, disease, environmental degradation, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and competing nationalisms. They can all be subsumed under the general issue of how to enable 8 to 10 billion people living on an overcrowded planet to cooperate and to abide by the common intentions so succinctly and eloquently spelt out in the preamble of the United Nations Charter.

The United Nations will be the key international instrument to which the international community, especially the small States, must turn for impartial adjudication between competing demands and for the maintenance of international peace and security. The General Assembly, as the most representative United Nations organ, together with the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations specialized agencies, will have to develop or strengthen their capacity to deal effectively with these transnational issues. A strengthened General Assembly will need to work closely with a more efficient Security Council.

That is why we maintain that Council reform should not focus narrowly on enlargement issues, but that Council reform needs also to examine the relationship between the Council and the general membership. To inspire greater confidence amongst the general membership and thus ensure greater support, the Council will also need to become more transparent and more consultative in its methods of work.

Mr. President, with your proven diplomatic skills and with a spirit of cooperation between Member States on this vital issue, we have no doubt that you will successfully guide us through the difficult negotiations that will take place in the open-ended working group. If, at the end of this exercise, we can honestly state that the United Nations system itself has begun changing for the better and in the overall interests of the entire membership and of the United Nations itself as an international organization, then we can truly say that the exercise has been worth while.

Mr. KALPAGÉ (Sri Lanka): General Assembly resolution 47/62 of 11 December 1992 requested the Secretary-General to invite the Member States to submit written comments on a possible review of the membership of the Security Council. Their views are before us in documents A/48/264 and Add.1, Add.2 and Add.2/Corr.1, Add.3 and Add.4.

There is clear agreement that the membership of the Security Council needs to be increased. There are basically three strong arguments for this. First, the membership of the United Nations has risen from 113 in 1965, when the present composition of the Security Council took effect, to 184 in 1993. Secondly, in the evolving international situation, which all members have categorized as being positive, there is a healthy feeling that equal participation, more balanced representation and political equilibrium are vital to promoting the purposes

and principles of the United Nations Charter. Thirdly, the United Nations, through the Security Council, is now not only involved more deeply in its traditional functions, but has also entered into radically new areas of activity that affect all nations in a manner not experienced before.

If the question is purely one of increasing the size of the Council, a suitable mathematical formula could be worked out in relation to the increase in the membership of the United Nations. Sri Lanka would favour enlarging the membership of the Security Council to a number between 21 and 25.

The criteria to determine the equitable distribution of the new seats would be more complex. The so-called regional distribution of seats involves much more than geography. If one goes by the traditional regional classification applied in the United Nations, there are the five regions of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Western Europe and other States, and Eastern Europe. However, in the Security Council the application of the regional yardstick has for historical reasons acquired a heavy political bias. The Council has been affected by the political and ideological stratification of the post-war period. Numerically and in other ways, this has tended to operate inequitably against the African, Asian and Latin American and Caribbean Member States, who have been underrepresented. If the increase is to be on regional basis, Sri Lanka believes it should be applied strictly, accurately reflecting the proportional strength of each region.

Apart from the question of an increase in the Council's membership, the item before us also enjoins us to consider a manner of representation which would be equitable. This concept goes well beyond a purely mathematical division of the proposed increase in seats.

The question involves larger issues such as the concept of the permanent members. It also raises the question as to whether the exclusive exercise of the veto power by the five permanent members is consonant with the expectations of equity and the principle of the sovereign equality of all States under the Charter. Non-Aligned Heads of State at their Summit in Jakarta last year were of the view that the veto powers, which guaranteed an exclusive and dominant role for the permanent members of the Council, are contrary to the aim of democratizing the United Nations and must therefore be reviewed. Past experience has shown that the exercise of the veto has sometimes crippled decisive action in the Council. We must acknowledge, however, that the veto has not been resorted to recently to the extent of its use in the past.

There are historical reasons which account for the present status of the five permanent members of the Security Council. It is important that we do not avoid scrutiny of the institution of the permanent members, because in a sense it lies at the heart of the Security Council's responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. There are new realities - political, military and economic - as well as other factors which have emerged since the five permanent members were invested with special status.

Other countries are being specifically mentioned, discussed and advocated as now also qualifying for the status of permanent members. Some of the arguments presented in support of these countries are at least as cogent as the arguments which were considered valid at the time when the present permanent membership was determined. If indeed we are interested in revitalizing the United Nations and enhancing the credibility, moral authority, effectiveness and representative nature of the Security Council, we should not presuppose that the present situation in respect of the permanent members is for all time. Thought should be focused on whether any additional States should be considered entitled to the status of permanent membership.

Given the special responsibilities accorded under the Charter to the Security Council, any change in its present composition, size and responsibilities needs to be effected only after the most careful thought. Change for its own sake should be avoided. Change should be effected only when alternatives which improve the present situation have been found acceptable.

It is in this context that we welcome the emerging consensus for the establishment of an open-ended working group which would consider the size, composition and basis for new membership in the Security Council and other related matters. The working group should conduct its consideration of these vital issues under conditions of openness and transparency.

The fundamental premise which endures is that the Security Council, whatever its size, composition and powers, is expected to act on behalf of the Member States in the manner that a Parliament or other representative national institution derives its mandate from the people. It loses justification, credibility and thereby eventually its effectiveness should it fail to act on behalf of those whom it is expected to represent.

The operating mandate of the working group concerns much more than mere procedure. Sri Lanka believes that the process of considering representation on the Security Council, briefly summarized, should be one which first,

provides an opportunity for all States to participate on the basis of the sovereign equality of States; secondly, considers all aspects relating to membership of the Security Council without restricting the review to adjustments which would place a few more seats at the table in the Security Council Chamber; and thirdly, takes decisions by consensus, so that they will enjoy universal acceptance.

This would ensure the full support of the entire international community and in turn lend greater strength and effect to Security Council action. This is, after all, our common objective.

Mr. ISMAIL (Malaysia): Malaysia was one of 73 delegations that replied to the request of the Secretary-General as a result of United Nations General Assembly resolution 47/62. This agenda item is one of the most important issues before the international community in our efforts to make the United Nations a true vehicle for global action.

There is a widespread search taking place at all levels to look for new equations and structures to cope with the changing international environment. The United Nations itself must be part of the change to manage critical global issues and to harmonize the actions of nations in the attainment of common goals as spelled out in the Charter.

The reform and restructuring exercise of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields has been making some encouraging progress. In addition, there is an ongoing exercise at revitalizing and restructuring the work of the General Assembly. Against the background of all those changes, it becomes undeniable that the Security Council too must change and adapt. Reform of the Security Council is necessary not only to reflect a more equitable geographical representation but also to contribute to the strengthening of the democratization process within the intergovernmental multilateral process.

This issue of equitable representation on the Council and increase in its membership was first introduced 13 years ago. It became the subject last year of a productive debate which resulted in the adoption of resolution 47/62. This year the debate continues, and the issue is now broadening, as it should, from one of representation and membership to encompass all other aspects. In essence, a process is now under way - a tortuous and complex process, if necessary - to effect collectively change and reform of the Council.

Malaysia's comprehensive position is reflected in document A/48/264, dated 20 July 1993. I do not want to go over the details, but I shall reiterate the salient points. First, the reform of the Security Council should be comprehensive. Secondly, there must be transparency in the Council's decision-making process. Thirdly, the Council should be more accountable to the general membership. Fourthly, the Council should reflect a more equitable geographical representation.

It will be noticed that our approach is comprehensive. We believe there is no quick fix for the Council's serious problems and flaws. Important principles are involved, and they must be examined in the light of new realities. It would be a mistake to think, for example, that adding two permanent members would actually improve the Council. Preoccupation with the admission of two members would merely distort the important issues that must be addressed: increased workload, heightened expectations, questionable working methods, absence of adequate representation and ambiguous mandates and objectives.

During the debate on agenda item 11, "Report of the Security Council", my delegation elaborated on some of those matters. We expressed our concern over the tendency of the five permanent members to keep to themselves much of the Council's substantive work, turning the "permanent five" into some kind of exclusive club. We underlined our concern that the concept of United Nations collective security was being undermined by the application of double standards to serve the political interests or expediency of certain members. We cited the delayed and half-hearted measures to end Serbia's blatant aggression in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a clear example of the Council's selectivity and failure to act in all necessary cases.

We continue to maintain that the Council's unwillingness to enforce its resolutions and respect General Assembly resolutions 46/242 and 47/121, calling for the cessation of hostilities and for respect for humanitarian law in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, will definitely undermine the credibility and faith placed in the Security Council and the concept of collective security. We have pointed out the indefensible position taken by the Council in denying the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina its inherent right to collective or individual self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter.

Urgent reform is necessary to dispel perceptions that the Western-dominated Council increasingly resorts to questionable decisions, the implementation of which, in the main, is left to other Member States, particularly those of the third world. Such perceptions are based on peace-keeping operations, approved by the Council, from which major countries gradually dissociate themselves for various reasons. Somalia may well be a case in point. A situation may arise in the future in which troops of third world countries will be virtually the only ones left there.

As the custodian of international peace and security, the Council, in carrying out its responsibilities, must act in conformity with the provisions of the Charter, particularly Article 24. In this regard, before taking major decisions or actions, the Council is duty-bound to consult regional groupings, troop-contributing countries and the general membership. The Council's resolutions should reflect the common will of the community, and not serve the interests of permanent members and their allies. As the Secretary-General observed in his report "An Agenda for Peace", agreement among the permanent members of the Council must have the deeper support of the other members of the Council, and the membership more widely, if the Council's decisions are to be effective and endure.

The Council should strive to gain the trust and confidence of the general membership by reassuring us that it will put into practice the following principles: it will not be a vehicle for imposing the will of the strong upon the weak; it will avoid selective and discriminatory approaches to international crises; it will respect the principle of transparency and democracy and will become responsive to the views of the general membership; and it will not exceed its mandate under the Charter.

It is equally important that members of the Council bear in mind that their role in the Council extends beyond their national imperatives. The permanent members have a special responsibility because of the privileges accorded to them by the Charter. Therefore, they should not follow the dictates, or remain within the confines, of their narrow national interests.

As for the non-permanent members, they have a larger duty to a larger constituency: the regional group they come from and others that elected them. They have to resist, and not succumb to, pressure by other members of the Council. Malaysia will support efforts to ensure that those that gain membership of the Council are qualified in all respects to shoulder important responsibilities in that body.

Consistent with the principle of the sovereign equality of States, Malaysia is against adding more permanent members. We are also cautious about new classifications of membership. Further stratification can only deepen and harden the asymmetries existing in the Council.

The veto power, which guarantees the dominance of the five permanent members, has to be re-examined. It is our view that the veto power has now become untenable and anachronistic. If we need to accept some kind of weighting in terms of asymmetries within the Council, we cannot accept a situation in which one, two or three in the Council are more powerful than the rest of the membership of the United Nations.

It is time to reject collectively the idea of an elite group continuing to decide on issues that affect peace and security. The programme for the future, as contained in "An Agenda for Peace", cannot be fully undertaken with a Council that neither fully commands the confidence of the majority nor is drawn equitably from the general membership. There must be closer interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council. Major decisions having significant global implications need to be taken in close consultation with the general membership. A revitalized United Nations must provide for an active General Assembly whose pronouncements on issues that are before the Council must be given weight by the Council.

Malaysia recognizes that the increased numbers of peace-keeping operations have imposed severe financial burdens on the five permanent members. In this connection, Malaysia would not be averse to considering more equitable burden-sharing. These and other relevant considerations could be discussed as the United Nations takes the necessary steps and measures to reform the Council.

Given the overwhelming desire to reform the Council, we welcome, Mr. President, your consultations to further the process. We are aware of the initiatives of some delegations, particularly India and Singapore, to assist you in that regard. We ourselves have been engaged in consultations with various delegations. The fundamental questions before us in this matter include those of mechanism and mandate.

On the specific issue of mechanism, we share the emerging consensus in favour of the establishment of an open-ended inter-sessional working group to address the reform issue. Given the importance of this issue, the working group could cooperate on the basis of joint coordination. Malaysia strongly supports the Non-Aligned Movement's decision to have two Co-Chairmen, with one of them coming from a developing country - Zimbabwe.

We fully support the Non-Aligned Movement's decision favouring a broad mandate for this group. The mandate could specifically include the following: increased membership, including size of and criteria for membership; effective and transparent functioning of the Council; and the relationship between the general membership and the Security Council.

While the working group should strive for consensus, it is important that we do not insist, as some do, that it be

spelled out, as this would be inconsistent with the practice of other Main Committees. I am reminded that the five permanent members have the veto power, and no amendment regarding the Security Council can be made without their consent.

We agree that this working group should try to complete its work before the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Malaysia looks forward to working with all delegations in ensuring the success of this working group.

A Council reformed both in structure and in substance and governed by accountability, democracy and transparency would contribute to a harmonious relationship between the Council and the General Assembly, and to making the United Nations the international vehicle for peace, democracy and development. If we work together, we have a unique opportunity to take steps in that direction. Otherwise, we will squander a golden opportunity and consign the United Nations to the fate of never living up to its full potential as envisaged in the Charter.

Mr. SAMHAN (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The past few years have witnessed a great deal of international and regional interest in the role of the United Nations and, particularly, in the role of the Security Council, the United Nations organ which is directly responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. Hand in hand with this increasing interest, there have been unremitting efforts aimed at reconsidering the functioning and structures of the United Nations and its principal bodies. The object of the exercise is to ensure that the United Nations role in international relations should continue to be crucial, decisive and efficacious and should lead to radical solutions to the world's problems, conflicts and disputes in all their aspects.

The "Agenda for Peace" presented by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, which deals with preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding, reflects the urgent need to deal with today's realities. This requires an enhanced and effective role for the Security Council in consonance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. Hence the importance of the General Assembly's consideration of item 33 of the agenda entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council".

The structure of the Security Council has not been affected by the changes that have taken place in State relations or by the new international political equations. Its membership has remained unchanged since 1963. There can be no doubt that the increase in the membership of the United Nations requires the consideration of effective and practical steps that should be taken towards the restructuring of the Security Council and towards ensuring equitable representation on the Council together with the required increase in the Council's membership.

My delegation supports the view that a limited increase in the Council's membership will not have the effect of hampering its effectiveness or of limiting it. On the contrary, it will enhance the Council's ability to react rapidly to threats, challenges and violations of peace and international security.

In that context, the United Arab Emirates emphasizes the importance of engaging in a comprehensive exchange of views and proposals on the restructuring of the Council. This should be done through the setting up of an open-ended working group whose membership should be open to all Member States of the Organization. In this context, there is a need to take into account the fundamental and far-reaching changes that have taken place in international relations in the post-cold-war period, as well as the increase in the Organization's membership.

In order for the approach to the question of restructuring the Security Council in the light of the increasing numbers of conflicts and disputes on the international and regional levels, we must try to reconcile the following objectives: First, balance must be ensured between the ambitions of regions and individual States with regard to representation in a manner that would ensure appropriate representation of all segments of the international community, ensure democratization and provide for increased transparency in the functioning of the Council. In this context, the principle of the sovereign equality of States must be respected, since this was one of the fundamental principles of the Charter upon which the international Organization was founded.

Secondly, flexibility and efficiency in decision-making must be ensured because of the need for the Council to react in a rapid and effective manner to all threats to international peace and security.

Thirdly, States must abide by the principle of settling their disputes by peaceful means and dialogue in consonance with the principles of the Charter and the norms of international law.

Fourthly, coordination between the Security Council and the General Assembly must be enhanced, in the light of the increase in the international Organization's membership.

Fifthly, paragraph 1 of Article 24 of the Charter states that in carrying out its duties, the Security Council acts on behalf of all Member States. Consequently, the composition of the Council must be more representative. However, that increase should not adversely affect the efficiency of the Council or its responsibilities in the area of maintaining international peace and security.

We must also take into account the new political realities, given the radical changes that have taken place on the regional and international levels. In order for us to achieve these objectives, my delegation attaches particular importance to the question of equitable representation of the various regions on the Council. We emphasize the importance of ensuring permanent Arab representation on the Council because the Middle East has been plagued by wars and conflicts since the very inception of the United Nations, and this has had implications for international peace and security and for the political and economic conditions of the States of the Middle East.

We hope that our deliberations will yield positive and decisive results which will lead to an expanded and more effective Security Council. We hope this can be implemented in 1995, the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

In conclusion, I should like to express our gratitude to all States members of the Security Council for the important role it plays in the service of international peace and security. We sincerely hope that those States and in particular the permanent members of the Council will be able to play an active role in the task of adapting the role and action of the Council to the realities of our new world. All Members of the international Organization, large or small, must respect the Council's resolutions in order to create an international environment of coexistence, stability and peace and establish a new international order that would be more just, equitable and compatible with the common interests of all humanity.

Mr. LI Zhaoxing (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: In 1945 the founding fathers of the United Nations solemnly signed the United Nations Charter in San Francisco. Since that time, for 48 years, this intergovernmental Organization with the greatest representation has braved wind and rain.

For nearly half a century the United Nations has made unremitting efforts to realize the objectives embodied in the purposes and principles of the Charter, namely, the maintenance of world peace and security and the promotion of mankind's common prosperity and development. In this connection it has, despite many setbacks, scored marked achievements.

The world today is no longer the same as it was yesterday. The United Nations itself has also undergone tremendous changes, with its membership increased from 51 States at its inception to the current total of 184, most of which are developing countries. With its enhanced status in world affairs the United Nations plays an increasingly important role.

Now the common issue facing all United Nations Member States is how the United Nations, in meeting the challenges that have arisen from the new and changing situation, can play a more constructive role in international affairs, better fulfilling the responsibilities entrusted to it by the Charter and thereby contributing to the establishment of a new international political and economic order.

The Chinese delegation welcomes the General Assembly's consideration of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and attaches importance to this exercise. The Chinese Government has already made its observations within the context of General Assembly resolution 47/62. We are willing to continue to discuss and exchange views on this issue with other delegations.

The expansion of the membership of the Security Council not only is the expressed wish and legitimate request of the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States, especially the developing countries, but is also necessitated by the changes both in the world and in the United Nations itself. The Chinese delegation is in favour of an appropriate expansion of the Security Council at an appropriate time so that, with its greater representation, the Council could better adapt to the changing world and deal with major world issues in a more active, balanced, fair and effective manner. In the expansion of the Security Council, therefore, full consideration should be given to the principle of equitable geographical distribution and particular attention should be paid to the fact that the overwhelming majority of the United Nations membership consists of developing countries.

In addition to the question of the Council's expansion, countries have also shown interest in such issues as how to increase the transparency of the work of the Council and how to identify the United Nations membership with its decisions.

According to the relevant provisions of the Charter, the Security Council acts on behalf of the entire United Nations membership in carrying out its duties for the maintenance of international peace and security. The actions of the Council should reflect the collective will,

common aspirations and accountability to all Member States. It is therefore extremely important for the Council to adopt appropriate measures to increase the transparency of its work and strengthen its links with Member States. The Chinese delegation is in favour of the Council's making continued efforts in this regard. From the long-term point of view such a practice will contribute to the increased efficacy of the Council as well as to the authority and effectiveness of its decision-making.

It is the wish of all United Nations Member States that the Council, by expanding its membership and taking other related steps, will improve its representation and discharge in a more satisfactory way its responsibilities under the Charter, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. In this connection the Chinese delegation shares the views of many other countries that no reform measures should adversely affect and weaken the Council's efficacious role and existing viable mechanism.

Meanwhile, we also believe that the expansion of the Council and the manner in which it is to be expanded will have a direct bearing on world peace and security and affect the fundamental interests of Member States. An appropriate solution can be found only after full and wide-ranging solicitation of the views of Member States, especially those of medium-sized and small countries, and on the basis of consensual acceptance by all Member States. The Chinese delegation is therefore in favour of establishing a working group in which all Member States would participate, to discuss the expansion of the Council and other related matters.

The United Nations is now at a historic transitional juncture. The Chinese delegation sincerely hopes that with the concerted efforts and cooperation of all Member States the United Nations will become a better, more effective and more reliable international organization.

Mr. HAYES (Ireland): The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Ireland addressed the subject of Security Council reform in his statement in the general debate at this session, as, indeed, did his predecessor as Minister for Foreign Affairs at the forty-seventh session. My delegation also spoke on the subject in the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization on 5 March this year. In this statement I will not add significantly to the substance of those contributions; rather will I seek to focus our views more closely on the negotiations - which were then foreseen but which now, we hope, are imminent - in an appropriately mandated working group.

Let me begin by referring to Articles 24 and 25 of the Charter. In paragraph 1 of Article 24 the Member States confer on the Security Council the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security and agree that in performing this function it acts on behalf of all the Member States. In Article 25 the Member States agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council.

Those provisions represent an unprecedented voluntary transfer of power by the founding Member States, since endorsed by the States, including Ireland, which became Members of the United Nations later. It is our belief that in this transfer of power the Member States, both the founding States and those later acceding, were motivated principally by three assumptions: first, a recognition that only a body of limited size could achieve the necessary efficiency and expedition; secondly, satisfaction that its composition would make it adequately representative of the United Nations membership; and, thirdly, the latter two assumptions being met, confidence that its actions would reflect the will of the membership.

In essence, we believe, the authority of the Security Council, which legally derives from Articles 24 and 25 of the Charter, rests ultimately on the Member States' perceptions of its legitimacy, which, in turn, is based on these three assumptions.

It has become a cliché - and, of course, it is correspondingly true - that the geopolitical world has changed utterly, particularly in recent years, and that the Security Council is consequently enabled to perform as was originally intended by the drafters of the Charter. The Council is also faced with a multiplicity of widely varied threats to international peace and security. Concern to ensure that it is equipped to cope effectively with the kind of problems that now confront it and, unfortunately, are likely to continue to confront it into the twenty-first century is what lies behind the movement - a movement that has been gathering momentum, especially in the last two years - to consider whether and how the Security Council should be reformed. In the view of my delegation, the specific major concern must be to act so as to ensure that the perception of legitimacy on which the authority of the Council ultimately rests is not eroded.

There are therefore certain considerations to which my delegation will have regard in the forthcoming negotiations. The composition of the Security Council needs to be adjusted to take account of the greatly increased membership - now almost universal - of the United Nations and also of the changes in the centres of political and economic power that have taken place since 1945. It seems unlikely that this can be achieved without some enlargement, which will raise further difficult questions, including important procedural ones.

Moreover, the Security Council's ability to act efficiently and expeditiously must be preserved - a need that has implications both for the Council's size and for its procedures. And the Security Council must not only act, as it is required to do, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter, but must be seen to do so. We must consider how that transparency can be consistently achieved. My delegation recognizes that, while these considerations sound relatively clear and simple, their application to the detailed issues that will arise will not always be easy.

Mr. Martini Herrera (Guatemala), Vice-President, took the Chair.

My delegation's constant aim in the course of the negotiations on which we are about to embark will be to ensure such a relationship between the Security Council and the general membership of the United Nations that, together, they will continuously share a sense of common purpose. Our positions will be geared to that aim above all. We intend to play an active and constructive part in the negotiations. What an achievement it would be for us all, and what a boost for the public image of the United Nations, if our negotiations were to result in agreement in time for the fiftieth anniversary.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): This is a very important debate. It is a product of the fact that the United Nations is in transit. We have a "new world" on our hands, but it is not yet an "order". Since the cold war ended, four years ago, the United Nations has embarked on more new peace-keeping, peacemaking, peace-enforcing and peace-building operations than it entered into in the whole of the preceding 43 years. We are in transit from the system in which we were frozen during those years, and we need to design the place where we will land.

In his book *Co-operating for Peace*, which was distributed to the Assembly on 27 September, the Australian Foreign Minister, Senator Gareth Evans, argues that great reform is required in the area of "the maintenance of international peace and security" and that the goal of that reform should be a determination to replace past notions of "collective security" and "common security" with the notion of "co-operative security". Only if we enter into an unprecedented act of international cooperation will we survive our transit - our passage from the old to the new - and land safely. A redesigned Security Council is an integral part of the necessary change from the old to the new.

My statement today will put Australia's point of view on how we might best approach that change. In stating our view, I want to make this clear at the outset: a great debate is at hand, and we shall take part in it, in cooperation with others, and shall do so with an open mind. Naturally, we hope that such an approach will characterize the debate - an open mind and a willingness to craft an outcome that serves the welfare of the whole international community.

Three main questions are at issue: "Why do it at all?", "What should we do?" and "How should we do it?".

The first question - "Why do it at all?" - is not raised by us because we think that this remains a matter of doubt. It is abundantly clear that there is widespread recognition throughout the Assembly that the Security Council must be changed. Earlier, there were echoes of the argument "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". Although that sounds folksy and wise, it is, in fact, a view that is misguided because it implies that we have to wait until something has broken down before taking action.

Australia does not suggest that the Security Council has broken down, but we are convinced, as are many others, that we can see now the need to change the Council before it breaks down. That the Security Council is under strain is illustrated in very many ways. Here is just one example: from 1948 to 1987 the Council adopted 15 resolutions under Chapter VII, whereas the corresponding figure for the period 1990 to the present is 58.

We must know clearly why we are embarked on an exercise as important as this. This will serve to maintain our focus on the main issues as against the peripheral issues. There is no substitute for not only doing the right thing but being certain that we are doing it for the right reasons.

In this context it is of irreducible importance to focus on Article 25 of the Charter. What it means in basic political and legal terms is that, because the decisions of the Council are binding upon all Member States, it is essential that, as far as possible, all decisions of the Council are able to command widespread if not consensual support from the whole membership, not just from a majority of members of the Council, or from all or some of the permanent members. The latter have particular powers under the Charter, but all of us have the same obligations and responsibilities.

One key way in which such consensual support for the Council's decisions can be shored up is by increasing the representative character of the Council. Although the Charter names certain Member States as permanent members, the rest of the membership of the Council is elected by the General Assembly - the universal body - and for this reason, as well as for other reasons found in the

Charter, the Security Council is, in good measure, a representative body derived from the General Assembly. In addition, it has clearly defined responsibilities towards the Assembly and the overall membership of the United Nations.

Given the increase that has taken place in that overall membership, and given that the size of the Council has remained static for 28 years, the Council's representative character has clearly declined, and many point out that this decline has been more than a decline measured in arithmetic proportions.

Many other arguments are advanced as reasons for reform - indeed, urgent reform - of the Council. But in the Australian view the need for the Council's decisions to command consensual support, and thus for it to have its representative character in relation to the overall membership restored, is among the most important such reasons for reform.

The second question - What should we do? - is the one on which it is already clear there will be a great variety of opinion and much debate. Australia's approach to this question is utterly rooted in one abiding concern: we must ensure that the new Council is effective. Change for the sake of change would make no sense if it led to a situation in which a new Council was less able to carry out its heavy responsibilities than the present one.

An effective Council will be one in which the membership is expanded to ensure that the Council better represents the universal membership than it does today. That expansion in its membership will take into account the criteria found in Article 23 of the Charter, perhaps bearing in mind particularly the third of the criteria, namely, equitable geographical distribution. The expansion will be kept within strict numerical limits, because, as is widely recognized, there is a size beyond which it is extremely difficult to think that the Council will be able to function effectively, simply because of the inherent dynamics of organs larger than, say, 25 members. Indeed, a number closer to 20 would be even more effective. Finally, it will not be made harder for decisions to be taken than is the case at present. It is for this reason that in the Australian reply to the Secretary-General's request for the views of Member States we stated that there should be no extension of the veto power even if the number of permanent members of the Council was increased. In this context, our reply stated:

> "Changes to the Council's composition must be related to and considered in tandem with a review of the Council's decision-making methods, which would then apply in an expanded Council". *(A/48/264, p. 8, para. 3 (b))*

There is no better way for me to sum up Australia's approach to why the Council must be reformed, and to the way in which it should be changed, than to refer again to Senator Evans's book *Co-operating for Peace*, in which he states:

> "Increasing attention is being focused on the Council's representativeness ... Its decisions ultimately depend for their effect on the extent of international support, which will in turn be influenced by the degree to which the Council is perceived to be adequately representative of the overall United Nations membership and to reflect the realities of global and regional power. To retain its legitimacy the Council must be seen to have a global range and be willing to turn its attention to conflicts and threats to international peace and security whenever the situation requires, rather than in accordance with the dictates of the national interests of individual Council members ... Security Council reform should address not only the issue of representativeness but also the need to enhance decision-making procedures."

I now turn to the third question: How will we achieve this reform? This seems to us to have three main answers. First, we must create a working group open to all members of the General Assembly in which we will have a full and open discussion of all the issues involved - membership, decision-making methodology, effectiveness and responsibility to the whole United Nations community.

Secondly, we must work vigorously and quickly. A report should be available by the end of the forty-eighth session so that we can go further in 1995 with a view to bringing home consensus by the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. This is not an arbitrary and certainly not a false deadline. The need for reform is urgent. It is demanded by our changed world, and those demands cannot be expected to diminish in the years ahead. Having a consensus ready by 1995 might mean - might mean - that the new Council would not be in operation until two or three years after that date, because of the period of time required for the process of ratification of changes in the Charter. So the question becomes: Can we afford to move less quickly? We think not.

Thirdly, with all of what we have already said in this statement about the need for the decisions of the Council to rest on a bedrock of consensus, so must we ensure that our decision to reform the Council itself rests on that same foundation. Consensus must be the rule in all things within the working group.

These are the Australian points of view on what we believe are the three main questions or categories of questions at issue in the historic work we are about to undertake - the work of reform of the organ of the United Nations uniquely charged with the maintenance of international peace and security.

But there are two related concerns that we should not ignore as we review the Council itself. These are the Council's relationship with other organs of the United Nations - in particular, the General Assembly - and the need for us to work with a more highly textured definition than we have employed in the past of what constitutes a threat to peace and security.

The relationship between the Council and the General Assembly has come to lack adequate mutual respect, and this has harmed the effectiveness of the Organization. It has led to inadequate transfer of information between the two bodies and, naturally, it has caused unnecessary and damaging resentment. This situation is not consistent with the relationship between the two bodies that was envisaged at San Francisco and set forth in the Charter.

Means of improved consultation and transfer of information between the two bodies can be found, and they must be found. Means of cooperation between the two can be created readily - for example by the Security Council's establishing committees on subjects such as peace-keeping, troop contributions or the prevention of conflicts, committees on which non-members of the Council could sit.

The Council could also take greater heed of what has been said in recent years in the Assembly - and said forcefully - about the nature, timeliness and quality of its report to the General Assembly. The Council could also make a greater effort to take into account seriously - not just notionally, but seriously - the views expressed by the Assembly. In this context, too much refuge should not be taken in Article 12 of the Charter.

On the side of the Assembly, there has been fair comment to the effect that if its views and requests are to be taken more seriously into account in the future, then it might have to consider crafting its positions with greater attention to practical rather than ideological concerns - in other words, somewhat more in a spirit of cooperating for peace than has been the case in the past. Surely the end of bipolar dominance of world politics should make it easier for the Assembly to adopt such a stance.

A fundamental concept at issue in all of this, one central to the role assigned to the Security Council in the Charter, is that of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security. In large measure, the Charter defines this in terms of sovereignty, in terms of the integrity and inviolability of States, and in terms of the use or threat of use of force - including by the United Nations.

Many have commented on the fact that, understandably, this definition, made as it was at the end of the Second World War, was framed largely in terms of military threats to security. But the reality in today's world and in the foreseeable future is that for most peoples as distinct from States - but indeed in many instances also including States - the most evident threats to security are either non-military or a mixture of non-military and military threats rather than pure or classic aggression, or solely military-based threats to security. It was for this reason that at its Summit meeting in January 1992 the Security Council incorporated into its statement the following passage:

> "The absence of war and military conflicts amongst States does not in itself ensure international peace and security. The non-military sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian and ecological fields have become threats to peace and security." *(S/23500, p. 3)*

Australia shares that view, and believes firmly that in the future we will need to ensure that we increasingly work with such a more highly textured definition of threats to peace and security. We would then address the real threats faced by so many people, and this should lead to a consequential redirection of the attention, the energy and the resources of the Security Council, the General Assembly and other organs and agencies of the United Nations system.

Speaking of the latter, I would point out that it is relevant that the Charter foresaw an important relationship between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, and established in Article 65 a creative relationship between the two, the potentiality of which was ignored during the cold-war period. There have already been proposals for reviving that relationship. They should be pursued.

In this same context, we must also pay greater attention to implementing Article 55 of the Charter, in which the positive connection is recognized between economic and social welfare and

> "the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations".

Article 56 pledges us all - it is indeed a pledge - to achieve the purposes set forth in Article 55.

Finally, I come to a point held to be fundamental by my Government. We have sorely neglected preventive action by the United Nations. That part of our work was the most evident, if not in fact the pre-eminent, victim of the cold war. The Charter system is composed of a Secretary-General, empowered to bring to the Council his perspectives, concerns and recommendations; the General Assembly of nations aware of and sensitive to problems developing in the world; the Security Council, with unique power to take decisions and mobilize resources. All of these facilities found in the Charter should have been directed extensively and vigorously to identifying problems and disputes before they escalated into armed conflict and to recommending and mounting solutions to those problems earlier rather than later. To those Charter-based facilities must now be added, in this information age, the dramatic expansion of media- and technology-based sources of information which have enabled us to be aware of emerging problems to an extent simply inconceivable 10 years ago.

As we review the Security Council let us ensure that it does its traditional job effectively, in a representative way, and that it takes decisions able to command widespread consensus in the world community. But let us also make it a modern place, a place dealing with a concept of threats to peace and security that is real in terms of what most people experience and in terms of what characterizes our contemporary and foreseeable world. And let us equip it and direct it, as far as possible, to seek to prevent rather than be compelled to cure conflict.

In conclusion, I repeat that we are in transit. We will land in a better world if we provide it with a Security Council fit for today's and tomorrow's circumstances, not yesterday's.

Mr. ELARABY (Egypt): The last few years have been characterized by rapid, far-reaching developments. As a result, the form and the substance of our contemporary world have drastically changed. These changes have created opportunities for cooperation, while confronting the United Nations with new challenges.

In order for the United Nations to adapt successfully to these rapid changes and these increasing challenges, a comprehensive re-examination of its principal organs has become imperative. Thus, an objective and functional approach to striving for improvement and reform should be adopted without delay.

The Security Council is the organ vested with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It should, therefore, be a primary target for reform. It should be recalled that when the Security Council was rendered inactive during the ideological confrontation of the cold war, a basic postulate of the Charter crumbled, and as a consequence the whole United Nations system suffered. The United Nations, which was created as an action-oriented organization, became helpless when faced with grave breaches of the peace and sometimes even became motionless when naked aggression was perpetrated.

Today's world power structure and the patterns of inter-State conduct augur well for a more responsive United Nations. Yet, this circumstance might lead to our being faced with a more potent Security Council; that should be the subject of careful reflection by the whole membership.

The Charter established certain checks and balances which should always be respected. In our contemporary world, it is fashionable to pronounce the concept of absolute sovereignty an anachronism. This dictum by necessity applies across the board. As provided in Article 24 (1) of the Charter, the Council acts on behalf of the whole membership. Hence it is accountable to the Member States and it is accountable to the General Assembly. The Council's exercise of its vast and unprecedented powers is not limitless. It could, if the need arose, be subject to review by the International Court of Justice to ensure that the rule of law and justice is paramount.

The General Assembly commenced the re-examination process and adopted resolution 47/62, which recognized the changed international situation and the need to continue the process of revitalization and restructuring within the United Nations system. The Secretary General's report (A/48/264) prepared pursuant to the aforementioned resolution clearly reflects the overwhelming support of Member States for efforts to re-examine, expand and reform the Security Council. There is now broad agreement on the need to enhance the democratic aspects of the composition and working methods of the Security Council, even more so in light of recent events which have clearly reaffirmed the pivotal role the Council plays in the field of maintenance of international peace and security.

Egypt, therefore, considers that equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council represents an integral component of the overall effort to improve and enhance the ability of the Council to fulfil its responsibilities as prescribed in the Charter.

We believe that the enlargement of the membership of the Security Council is an essential step to initiate the process of strengthening the Council. However, this should be done without prejudice to the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of the Council and should reflect both the nature and the extent of the new balance of power, as well as the prominence of regional Powers as major international actors, with due regard being paid, in this context, to the interests of developing countries. It should always be borne in mind that a larger and more equitably representative Council will certainly be more responsive and more credible.

It is therefore only appropriate to take a fresh look at the composition of the Council with a view to reflecting accurately the increase in United Nations membership as well as the realities of the international and regional power structures. To this end Egypt, in its response to the Secretary General's invitation to Governments for comments, proposed that

> "In order to take into account the new developments that have recently emerged in our contemporary world, it would be beneficial to devise a new category of membership in the Council that recognizes present regional realities. An intermediate group of members between the permanent members and the non-permanent ones should be established. A possible formula to address this issue would be to establish in each region one or more seats without veto power to rotate between the major Powers of that region. In this context, due regard should be paid - in accordance with the provisions of Article 23, of the Charter - to the contribution of States Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and other purposes of the Organization, including participation in peace-keeping operations, where developing countries are offering a substantial contribution and assuming increasing responsibilities." (*A/48/264/Add.2, pp. 2 and 3*)

In our view the establishment of an open-ended working group to consider the composition of the Security Council is clearly a step in the right direction. We firmly believe that such a working group should consider all matters related to the functioning of the Security Council. The programme of the working group should comprise an overall review of the practices, methods and procedures of the Council, as well as its relations with the General Assembly and other principal organs established by the Charter, to ensure the most efficient, democratic and transparent decision-making process.

A draft resolution on this item has been negotiated among a large number of States representing all regions. I would like to thank the delegations of Singapore and India for the leadership role they performed admirably. The final version of the draft is a compromise which was carefully balanced. General formulations were used when it became apparent that it was not possible to spell out the real intent. One point, however, is quite clear. The draft rightly asserts that the working group would be mindful of the importance of reaching general agreement. On such a sensitive issue, we agree that all delegations should strive to attain general agreement. This should not, however, be construed as conferring on any delegation, or a number of delegations, a veto power to frustrate the work. It is also relevant to point out that the attainment of general agreement should be confined to the end-product of our work and should not apply to the various phases of the working process.

I wish to commend the President of the General Assembly for having taken the initiative on this matter, and to reiterate the intention of my delegation to participate actively in the discussions of the working group which, we hope, will successfully conclude its work before the conclusion of the current session of the General Assembly, thus enabling the next session of the Assembly to commence the required process of ratifying amendments to the Charter as soon as possible and as provided for in its Article 108.

In conclusion, it is submitted that, in the final analysis, the original Charter design has been altered. Many of the Charter concepts proved impractical and have been tacitly abandoned. New trends and concepts have emerged and gained acceptance through gradual evolution. The previously well-advertised shortcomings of the United Nations should be jointly addressed, and suitable measures to ensure a more effective system should be decided upon. Interaction between emerging trends and concepts could create auspicious conditions for a more effective and responsive United Nations.

Mr. GRAF ZU RANTZAU (Germany): In the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council's areas of primary responsibility are set out as maintaining international peace and security and ensuring prompt and effective action by the United Nations. It is therefore of the essence that the Security Council enjoy the greatest possible credibility. My Government agrees with the overwhelming majority of Member States that the changed international situation and the constant increase of the membership of the United Nations necessitate a review of the present size of the Security Council.

This issue has been the subject of ever-more-intense debate within the United Nations for a number of years. Resolution 47/62, which was adopted on an Indian

initiative in 1992, requested the Secretary-General to invite Member States to submit written comments on a possible review of Security Council membership and thus created a basis for further discussion. Seventy-five Members have in the meantime complied with the Secretary-General's request for comments. The large number of replies and their contents are ample proof of the need to deal with this issue in a comprehensive way. The Secretary-General, in his report of September 1993 on the work of the Organization, stated that "proposals warranting serious study are now on the table". *(A/48/1, para. 40)*

At this point in my very brief remarks I would like to quote the following from the statement of Germany's Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs on 29 September before the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly:

> "The most important decisions on security and peace are today made in the Security Council. This is what the Charter envisaged right from the start. Anyone who wants peace must strengthen the Security Council.
>
> "In its response to the Secretary-General's request, the Federal Government has stated that efficiency and credibility are of equal importance for the future composition of the Security Council.
>
> "Germany is prepared to assume responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council also. ... However, we will be able to maintain and strengthen the credibility of the Council only if, in deliberating on reforming it, we also take into consideration the growing importance of the [developing countries]." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 8th meeting, p. 18)*

In order to find an answer to the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, we endorse firmly the establishment of an open-ended working group and at the same time commit ourselves to constructive participation in the work of this group with the aim of strengthening the United Nations as a whole. I shall reserve detailed comments for the deliberations in that group.

In conclusion, may I remark that, to us, it appears that the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, in 1995, could serve as orientation for the deliberations of that working group.

Mr. BURCUOĞLU (Turkey): There have been profound changes in the framework and substance of international relations in the past few years. And yet the creation of a new and desirable international order continues to be the most challenging task of our times. The crucial moments of history in which we are living call for reflection and positive action. The international community should not passively witness change but must have the will to establish adequate mechanisms to control its direction.

In this connection, the focus should be the Security Council. Today, the prestige and credibility of the United Nations depend more than ever on the effectiveness of the Security Council, which carries the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The end of the cold war freed the Security Council from political constraints and enabled it to assume a vastly expanded role. The new international environment requires a fresh approach to the Security Council and a re-examination of its role. To enable the Security Council to discharge its expanded responsibilities more effectively and efficiently, the moral authority of the Council should be reinforced. This would require that the Security Council become more representative of and responsive to the new geopolitical and economic realities. At the same time, its working methods should be reviewed to reflect the spirit of democratization. Hence, the discussions on the question of equitable representation and the focus on the increase in the membership of the Security Council are very timely and should lead to an early restructuring of the Council.

Having taken note of the reports of the Secretary-General containing the views of 75 Member States, we are pleased to observe that there is a broad consensus on the following four points. First, the effectiveness of the Security Council is important; but, secondly, so are the credibility and moral authority of the Council. Thirdly, there should be an increase in the membership of the Security Council. Fourthly, the working methods of the Council should be reviewed and the Council should become more transparent and democratic in its decision-making process.

We are also glad to note that some progress has already been achieved in relation to transparency. The mechanisms which were adopted by the Security Council on 30 June 1993 and are set forth in document S/26015 represent a commitment to and a step forward in the process of transparency. However, more could and should be done.

Under Article 25 of the Charter the Member States agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. This makes the Council unique within the United Nations system. The authority of the Security Council's decisions emanates from the fact that the Council, in

accordance with Article 24 of the Charter, acts on behalf of all Members of the United Nations. For that reason, its decision-making process is of the utmost importance, and it is essential that the Council's decisions should be in accord with the views of the general membership.

The fact that the Council's resolutions must have an adequate consensual base is also inherent in the letter and spirit of paragraph 4 of Article 1 of the Charter, which lists harmonizing the actions of nations as one of the purposes of the United Nations. Accordingly, the legitimacy of Council action ultimately turns on the degree of consensus, expressed through political mechanisms rather than legal concepts. Therefore, the lack of sufficient consultation mechanisms undermines the legitimacy of Council resolutions.

In practical terms, what is now needed is a system of consultation that would enable the general membership to participate, where and if necessary, in the informal consultations of the Council. It is for this reason that the growing number of Chapter VII actions and the very limited consultations held thereon are causing great concern amongst the general membership. Since all Member States must comply with sanctions imposed by the United Nations, at least those most affected should be able to participate fully in the decision-making process.

Unfortunately, the Council's current method of working relies heavily on the permanent five and on closed informal consultations. Further procedures should be devised to render this system more democratic, for the benefit of non-members. All parties directly involved in a dispute of which the Security Council is seized, including non-member States, should be invited to take part in these deliberations. Also, the Security Council should hold more frequent public meetings to allow the general membership to participate in debates on matters of interest to them.

As expressed by my Foreign Minister, Mr. Hikmet Çetin, in his statement to the General Assembly on 30 September, we firmly believe that:

> "enlarging the Security Council membership would enhance its effectiveness." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 11th meeting, p. 35)*

But enlargement should not be conceived only as an increase in the number of members; it should also envisage the creation of a new category of seats to be held by States that could be qualified as semi-permanent members. Semi-permanent membership in the Council might rotate among a specific number of States designated according to objective criteria: population, representative weight, geopolitical posture, economic potential, record of contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and geographical distribution. We are particularly pleased to note that a considerable number of countries have made similar proposals in relation to the creation of a new category of membership and the application of the rotation principle.

We also hold the view that the Security Council must be representative both quantitatively and qualitatively. In other words, we must find ways and means to eliminate the possibility that a United Nations Member with a significantly large population might not serve on the Council for a very long period of time. That possibility is also in contradiction with the preamble to the Charter, which begins:

> "We the peoples of the United Nations ...".

It also undermines the representative weight of the Council.

Democratization of the Council's structure would be a further encouragement for the States Members of the United Nations to participate actively in the Council's work, and would strengthen the moral ground for the implementation of its resolutions. Otherwise, public support for the Security Council's activities will not be forthcoming.

One of the most urgent tasks before us is the institution of a system of checks and balances. Actually, the democratic principle of accountability is immanent in the Charter; what we must do now is to reactivate its relevant Articles. In this context, and since the bipolar domination of the international system is now behind us, we believe that the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly merits reconsideration.

Indeed, paragraph 1 of Article 15 of the Charter states that the General Assembly shall not only "receive" but also "consider" annual and special reports from the Security Council. In this connection, the reports of the Security Council to the General Assembly should be more substantive, in order to provide an adequate basis for the general membership thoroughly to "consider" the work of the Council.

There is sufficient creative thinking and a wide-ranging demand for an early restructuring of the Security Council. We must start our work as soon as possible. We hope that we shall be able to establish, by consensus, an open-ended working group with the mandate of Security Council reform. Such a working group should start its work on the basis of the reports of the Secretary-General,

which comprise the views of 75 Member States. The interlocking concepts of effectiveness, representativeness, transparency, accountability, credibility, legitimacy and moral authority should guide the deliberations of the working group. Our aim should be to enhance all these concepts. We must rise to the challenge.

Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand): My delegation is pleased that the agenda item on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council is being taken up again by the General Assembly at its current session.

The issue is gaining greater attention at an appropriate juncture in the history of the United Nations. The importance of the United Nations and its organs today cannot be overstated. Member States are continually making efforts to revitalize and restructure the United Nations, indicating the increasingly crucial role of the United Nations as the world's single most comprehensive multilateral forum today.

In the post-cold-war era the demand for the United Nations to be what its founding fathers wanted it to be is ever more relevant and necessary, and becomes a pressing concern when it is evident that what the world needs is collectivism and resolve. The maintenance of international peace and security and the requirements for humanitarian assistance have indeed made the United Nations the principal mechanism for translating the collective will of the international community into tangible results, albeit with varying degrees of success.

The agent to which the Charter entrusts the authority to act in these circumstances is the Security Council, but there is increasingly being felt the wish of the general membership of the Organization to see that the United Nations is more balanced and more representative of its membership, especially within its most important agent responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The responses by Member States to last year's resolution 47/62 on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council amply demonstrated a continuing desire by members of the Assembly to see change in the decision-making processes that pertain to the management of international peace and security.

It is with a similar concern and desire for change that my delegation wishes to participate in this debate. We believe that dialogue is the first step in any process of change. Sharing common concerns and avoiding confrontation is perhaps the best way to improve the United Nations in the prevailing post-cold-war environment.

The United Nations and its relevant bodies have undergone many changes; yet the Security Council has remained much the same since 1945. As stipulated in Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, the General Assembly has conferred on the Security Council the primary responsibility to maintain peace and security and to act on its behalf. It is therefore appropriate that the views of the General Assembly be sought. We do not seek to go beyond the mandate of the General Assembly as set out in Article 12 of the United Nations Charter. However, my delegation believes that the times warrant a comprehensive review of the Security Council. More important, the issue of equitable representation should be an integral part of this review.

The last time the Security Council was enlarged was in 1963. This was based on the rationale that United Nations membership had significantly increased - from 51 Members in 1954 to 113 in 1963. Now, 30 years have passed, and there are 184 Members. Profound changes in the international system and in the configuration of power as well as the increase in the number of new Member States are valid grounds on which to consider all aspects of the question of increasing the membership of the Security Council. The examination of this issue must include a review of matters relating to the working methods of the Security Council and to the evolving relationship of the Security Council and the United Nations membership as a whole. My delegation realizes that this could be a long process. It is all the more urgent, then, that we take the initial step as soon as possible.

My delegation firmly believes that this review should be based on the principles stated in Article 23 of the Charter. We are also willing to consider an increase in the number of permanent or non-permanent members, as well as other categories of membership. The Secretary-General's report (A/48/264 and Add.1-4) would provide a useful and valuable background for this consideration. The opinions sent to the Secretary-General by Governments would also be of great importance to our deliberations on these issues.

An important matter related to the reform of the Security Council has to be the question of effective functioning and transparency in its working methods. While exigencies arising from various conflicts in the world have necessitated that the Security Council discharge its responsibilities promptly and expeditiously, there is no viable substitute for a transparent and democratic process that rests on a broad foundation of support by the membership as a whole. Decisions made by the Security Council must be, and must be seen to be, made openly for

these decisions to garner the broad-based support they need to be effective. One small but effective method to help increase communication and improve understanding of the Council's decisions could be the establishment of a link through a spokesperson - a device that might be possible under the provisions of Article 12.2 - or perhaps by the maintenance of regular contact with regional groups.

These matters are closely linked and fully relevant to another important question which cannot be ignored: the relationship between the Security Council and the membership as a whole - that is, the General Assembly. With better communication between the Security Council and the General Assembly, there is also the likelihood that a better relationship will emerge as a result.

Although this issue is not one which will be easy to resolve, neither is it an intractable problem, given the political will of Member States to cooperate and, together, to find a workable solution. We have done it before in the past, and we can do it even better in the days ahead. Certainly, by the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, in 1995, we should have the full implementation of the reform we now seek to institute for the Security Council. Towards these ends, the Thai delegation is willing to be an active participant in and is fully supportive of the undertakings we are embarking upon under this important item in the plenary Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

62nd
PLENARY MEETING
Tuesday, 23 November 1993
at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY
(Guyana)

Vice-President: Mr. SOH
(Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 33 (*continued*)

QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/48/264 and Add.1, Add.2 and Add.2/Corr.1, Add.3 and Add.4)

Mr. NGO QUANG XUAN (Viet Nam): First of all, I would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/48/264, which provides us with useful guidance and input for our discussion. My Government has already communicated our views to the Secretary-General, and I wish now only to stress a few points that my delegation believes are of great importance.

The end of the cold war has provided the United Nations with unprecedented opportunities to discharge its noble responsibility with regard to world peace, stability and development. However, the present situation also brings with it many pressing challenges which can be adequately met only by the joint efforts of the whole international community. The United Nations is therefore assuming a more important role in international life than ever before.

We are now on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. The map of the world is no longer as it was when this Organization was established. The number of Member States has increased from 51 to 184. The geopolitical realities which served as the basis for the composition of its principal organs, particularly the Security Council, during the years following the Second World War were fundamentally different from current ones. This raises many questions about the adequacy of the United Nations system.

The adaptation and adjustment of United Nations structures to world realities has apparently lagged behind the requirements of the times. Moreover, the constantly growing volume of work entrusted to the United Nations and the need for collective action in resolving international affairs in an increasingly interdependent world make periodical reviews and adjustments of the size and structure of the major organs of the United Nations system necessary.

The Security Council, which is vested with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, has during the past few years dramatically increased its activities in all continents of the world. However, its membership has remained unchanged for 30 years and is now less representative than ever before in both size and geographical distribution of seats.

This situation demands that the United Nations itself reform its structures and mode of operation so as to ensure efficiency, democracy, transparency, fairness and equality among all Member States. In this connection, the delegation of Viet Nam believes that the restructuring of the Security Council should be an integral part of a broad and far-reaching process of reform of the United Nations

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system. This will enable the Organization fully to discharge the important work assigned to it by the Charter.

The issue of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council was placed on the agenda of the General Assembly 14 years ago. Unfortunately, not much progress has been made. Last year's General Assembly resolution 47/62, adopted by consensus, certainly marks a qualitative change and reflects the recognition of the international community that the time has come to reassess the composition of the Security Council.

Viet Nam endorses the idea of re-examining and enlarging the composition of the Security Council. In view of the great increase in the membership of the United Nations and other new developments over the past 48 years, an increase in Security Council membership has now become a must and should bring about more equitable representation. At the same time, redressing the imbalance in regional representation in the Council's permanent membership is an objective demand. The re-examination and reform of the composition of the Security Council must this time be aimed at producing not only an increase in its membership but also a substantive change to ensure respect for the principles of equal sovereignty and of democracy in decision-making, and to bring about a more balanced and rational relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Since the Security Council acts on behalf of all Member States of the United Nations, it should reflect the universality of the whole Organization. Therefore, Viet Nam holds the view that in enlarging the composition of the Security Council due attention must be given to the concerns of developing countries, which make up more than three quarters of the total United Nations membership, with a view to ensuring that the voice of the majority is adequately heard when the Council decides on the settlement of issues of importance to the international community. Moreover, while closely cooperating with other United Nations organs, the Security Council should confine itself to its own sphere of competence. Its procedures should also be improved to reflect greater transparency and accountability.

In the past, various appropriate reviews and enlargements of the membership of the principal organs of the United Nations have significantly strengthened the capacity of the Organization to resolve global issues. It is my sincere hope that this time the debate on the subject now under examination will constitute a positive step in the right direction. The process of reform and democratization within the United Nations, particularly the equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, will effectively provide the Organization with a better capacity to serve the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Mr. HATANO (Japan): I take this opportunity to express the views of the Japanese Government on agenda item 33, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council."

To the President of the General Assembly and those ambassadors - particularly Ambassador Chew of Singapore - who have actively participated in the formulation of the draft resolution on this item, I pay high tribute.

With the end of the cold war, the international community is placing ever greater expectations in the United Nations. Today the Organization is confronted with unprecedented challenges and opportunities.

Under those circumstances, the legitimacy and credibility of the United Nations and the Security Council must be enhanced through a process of reform. The need to expand the membership of the Security Council while ensuring its effectiveness is thus gaining support throughout the international community.

Japan is prepared to do all it can to discharge its responsibilities in the reformed United Nations and in response to the expectations of the international community.

Japan supports the draft resolution, calling upon the General Assembly to establish an open-ended working group to discuss this issue. It is extremely important that the draft resolution gain approval by consensus.

I trust that all members of the working group will take part in the discussion in a constructive manner and that they will prepare a meaningful report and recommendations on this important issue. Japan is ready to participate actively in this endeavour, and is hopeful that a solution can be found in time for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995.

Mr. GUJRAL (India): We have, I feel, come a long way since the days of the thirty-fourth session, during which India, together with several other non-aligned countries, had the item "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council" inscribed on the agenda. Our objective at that time was merely to seek an expansion of the non-permanent membership of the Security Council to reflect the phenomenal increase in the membership of the United Nations. The initiative remained dormant for

several years, as we were persuaded by some countries, particularly the permanent members, that the time had not come for a change in the composition of the Security Council.

However, following the dramatic events of the late 1980s public opinion around the world led to a revival of the proposal, and it became evident - more than before - that it was imperative to review the composition and the functioning of the Security Council. This reality was recognized by the General Assembly when it unanimously adopted resolution 47/62 in 1992.

We have before us the Secretary-General's report (A/48/264 and Add.1-4 and Add.2/Corr.1), which brings together the views of several Member States on the questions before us today. Moreover, a number of leaders of different nations have articulated their views from this rostrum. Fortunately, the framers of the United Nations Charter were well aware that its contents could not be frozen in perpetuity and that it should be responsive to changing circumstances and requirements.

Chapter XVIII of the Charter was so designed as to give future generations the option to amend it in order to meet the needs of the time. The Charter, I must say, has stood the test of time for nearly half a century. It has fallen to our lot to update it and make it a vibrant and contemporary instrument of multilateralism.

The numerical compulsion for reform is too evident to need reiteration. As representatives know, the ratio between Security Council membership and General Assembly membership has declined from 1:4.6 in 1945 to 1:12 today, and the ratio between the permanent membership of the Security Council and General Assembly membership has declined even more tellingly - from 1:10 in 1945 to 1:36 today. On the basis of arithmetic alone, therefore, there is an obvious need to increase the number of permanent members of the Council to 10, or perhaps even 11, and the number of non-permanent members could go up to 12, or maybe 14.

The compulsion of which I have spoken has become more telling because of the urgent need to cope with the changing realities of international relations. The elimination of ideological barriers has enhanced the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, primary responsibility for which the Charter assigns to the Security Council. We are happy that the Council is playing a very effective role today, unfettered by the ideological wranglings of the past. For this very reason, it is all the more important that it should enjoy the trust and faith of the entire membership of the United Nations and be given added legitimacy for its efforts.

The demands on the Council have increased, and in response the Council's initiatives have increased. Its initiatives will be better understood and its decisions better implemented if the Council itself is more representative of the membership of the Organization. We are convinced that a marginal increase in the size of the Council will not affect its effectiveness. Even the smaller Council that we know was unable to remedy its paralysis during the cold war. In fact, failure to change it might endanger its credibility and moral authority. Unity of purpose, rather than size, is the factor that determines the efficiency of any organization.

The Secretary-General's report contains a whole range of proposals put forward by States, big and small, rich and poor. The proposals are as varied as the countries themselves. The underlying theme is that membership of the Security Council should be reviewed on the basis of the principles of equity and efficiency. The objective of the review should be to further the purposes and principles of the Charter by ensuring that the Council, which acts on behalf of the entire membership, reflects the composition of the world body. In other words, we already have a firm basis for a review.

In our view, the next step is for the General Assembly to set up an open-ended working group to examine these wide-ranging proposals and to make appropriate recommendations for adoption - if possible, by consensus. In the first instance, the working group should establish the exact extent to which the permanent and non-permanent membership of the Security Council should be expanded. The establishment of the criteria for new permanent and non-permanent members would be the next logical step.

We believe that the following should be the factors determining the qualifications for new members: equitable regional representation; consistency in support for and participation in important political and economic activities and peace-keeping operations of the United Nations; consistency in fulfilling financial obligations to the United Nations and its specialized institutions; and countries' population, size of economy and potential.

With the increasing emphasis on the principles of democracy at the national level, there is an urgent need to extend this principle to international life and to give increasing attention to the role of peoples, particularly in the activities of the United Nations and in the sphere of development. The fiftieth anniversary is rightly dedicated to the theme "We the Peoples of the United Nations ... United for a Better World". Populations reflect both an

expression of the principles of democracy and an element of power. The present permanent membership of the Security Council reflects a combined population of less than 1.7 billion. This leaves out two thirds of humanity - several distinct civilizations without representation as permanent members of the Council.

Similarly, the size of the economy and its resilience and self-sufficiency in terms of supplies of raw materials in the markets are factors that have a bearing on a country's ability to exercise independence of judgement and action on international issues. This also should be an important consideration in deciding upon the countries that could have permanent member status.

The contribution of a Member State to peace-keeping could be an important criterion in judging its suitability for inclusion in the permanent membership.

Financial contributions should be judged not in absolute terms but in the context of an assessment that reflects the higher sacrifice made by the developing countries. With regard to this criterion, the current situation, as well as potential members, should be taken into account, as another review may not be possible for several years.

Some of the proposals of Member States favour regional rotation in the Security Council and seek the creation of a third category of member. The principle of rotation is already embodied in the category of non-permanent membership, and this would be extended with such an increase in the number of permanent members. Permanent membership on a rotational basis would militate against the continued representation of, and the accumulation of experience by, developing countries. Equity dictates that there should be new permanent members from the developing world and that they should be elected globally, due weight being given to geographical considerations.

The open-ended working group of the General Assembly, when it has been set up, will have a formidable task before it. It will have to sift through the enormous amount of material emanating from Member States, other institutions and individuals. The eventual outcome will have to be a political package that reflects the wishes of the international community as a whole. Instant remedies and provisional solutions will not be helpful.

Reforms relating to the functioning of the Security Council and its relationship with the other principal organs of the United Nations, also deserve close attention. My delegation therefore urges a patient, detailed and careful review that will result in solutions that will serve the international community for many years to come. My delegation stands ready to participate in this exercise with all the dedication at its command.

Mr. WISNUMURTI (Indonesia): Recent developments on the international scene have focused our attention on the increasing importance of the role played by the Security Council. This lofty body has undertaken an unprecedented number of activities as it is being called upon to deal with some of the most critical and complex issues of our time. Consequently, members look forward to its playing an even more effective role now that the impediments which paralysed it for so long no longer exist.

Concurrently, however, it is undeniable that the Council, comprising 15 members, purports to act on behalf of an Organization, the membership of which has now reached 184 and is approaching universality. This stark imbalance has called into question the legitimacy, equity and credibility of a body which, in terms of the Charter, acts on behalf of the Organization and whose decisions are binding on all Member States.

It is pertinent to note in this regard that other organs of the United Nations, most notably the General Assembly, have adapted their composition and structure to the new and emerging realities. In the case of the Security Council, however, the process of expansion initiated nearly a decade and a half ago, has lagged behind and somehow remains beyond the purview of an integral part of the broad and far-reaching process of reform and revitalization of the United Nations itself.

Meanwhile, the number of developing countries that have become Members of the Organization and constitute the overwhelming majority has grown and their role in the international arena has increased. From another perspective, some developing States that now have a decisive weight in world affairs are being marginalized. Moreover, decisions impinging on critical issues of peace and security are being taken by a handful of States, a state of affairs that has justifiably given rise to indignation and resentment. In short, the composition of the Security Council, especially during the past three decades, has been grossly unbalanced, inequitable and unrepresentative.

It is time, therefore, to undertake a serious review and reappraisal of this question in order to ensure that the Security Council truly reflects not only the significant increase in membership but also the profound change and the transition that have taken place on the international landscape. We remain convinced that a larger Council will be more credible, will make its activities more effective and will reflect the broader membership of the United Nations.

We therefore endorse the proposal for an increase in both the permanent and the non-permanent Council seats in order to achieve equitable geographic representation and an acceptable balance between the developed and developing countries. Such an increase, covering all regions of the world has become imperative owing not only to the substantive increase in membership but also to the undeniable realities of the international situation.

We are faced with an untenable anomaly where three States from one region are permanent members while another region is underrepresented and two others are unrepresented. Thus, major regions and countries of the world are arbitrarily denied permanent membership. In my delegation's view, therefore, an increase in membership of the Council should accommodate new permanent members on the basis of a combination of appropriate criteria that would reflect, among other things, the new and emerging constellation of Powers, their regional and global responsibilities, and the political, economic and demographic realities. These include the willingness of States to assume the responsibilities inherent in such a status and thereby to contribute to bolstering the Council's capacity to fulfil its mandate; participation in peace-keeping; proven competency to undertake diplomatic initiatives and to make substantial contributions to conflict prevention and conflict resolution; the support of the Government and the people concerned for the United Nations and timely contributions to its budget; and active participation and leadership in a wide array of subregional, regional and extraregional organizations. To these we must add size and strategic location, economic power - both present and potential - pace of industrial growth and technological progress as well as human and natural resources. Finally, permanent membership for those non-nuclear-weapon States that have long played a constructive role in international relations can no longer be denied.

Concurrently, the non-permanent membership should also be increased and equitably distributed among various regional groups, thereby achieving greater democratization and a balance in composition.

In sum, such an approach to enlarge both the permanent and the non-permanent membership would reflect the current configuration of membership, ensure the representation of all continents and geographic groups and give rise to a more representative and effective Security Council.

Finally, the question of the composition of the Security Council cannot be resolved in isolation from its voting practices. The right of veto was accorded as a result of exceptional historical circumstances which no longer prevail. It is incompatible with the equal rights of States and disregards the wishes of the vast majority of States. We are aware that this mechanism has been rarely used in recent times but there is no assurance that it will not be used again with its negative repercussions. Hence, the veto system should be reviewed in order to promote democratic decision-making procedures.

The reform and revitalization of the Security Council is a *conditio sine qua non* for strengthening the United Nations and is critically important for the emerging new international order. In these endeavours, the main objective is to render the Council more responsive to changing realities and emerging challenges in a dynamic context. In this respect it is both necessary and appropriate that the question now before us should be examined with caution and circumspection in an open-ended working group. Quite apart from considering the question of review of the Council's membership, we also envisage discussion of related issues such as its relationship with and accountability to the General Assembly and the changes needed in the Council's procedures and practices. My delegation will participate constructively with the objective of reaching a broad-based consensus and ensuring the success of our endeavours.

Mr. SUCHARIPA (Austria): Since the end of the cold war the importance of the Security Council for the maintenance of world peace has increased significantly. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council during the years 1991 and 1992, Austria experienced the new cooperative spirit of international relations which has enabled the Council to play a crucial role commensurate with the functions and powers conferred on it by the Charter of the United Nations.

Owing to the augmented importance of the Security Council, its effectiveness is of the highest significance for the maintenance of international peace and security. That is why the Government of Austria is of the opinion that a thorough discussion of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council is necessary before decisions are taken.

Therefore, I gladly take this opportunity to outline briefly the main points that will guide the Austrian delegation throughout the debate on the important issue before us, a debate that might well occupy us for many months, if not years, to come. We should not rush our decision or feel bound by artificial target dates. The issue before us is much too important. We should, moreover, allow for further international developments to be taken fully into account in our deliberations.

In all modesty, the Austrian delegation feels particularly entitled to make an input to the upcoming debate: Austria currently possesses an intimate knowledge of the working methods of the Security Council, knowledge that was gained both here in New York and in Vienna in the course of our most recent membership of the Council, which ended on 31 December last year. At the same time, it is obvious that, while maintaining a high interest in the work of the Council, Austria will not become a member of that body again for quite some time, regardless of the outcome and conclusions of this debate. We therefore combine knowledge and impartiality *vis-à-vis* the difficult issues that will be at the centre of our discussions.

Let me therefore summarize the main points of the Austrian position on this issue.

First of all, is there a need for an enlargement of the Security Council? At the founding of the United Nations in 1945, the ratio of the overall membership of the Organization to the membership of the Security Council was roughly six to one. The first enlargement of the Security Council occurred in 1965, taking into account the substantial increase in the overall membership of the United Nations that took place at that time. Despite this enlargement, the ratio achieved was only eight to one. The recent dramatic increase in the membership of the United Nations has made the ratio drop to twelve to one. It seems obvious that the increase in overall membership of the Organization has to be reflected in the composition of the Security Council.

My second point relates to criteria for the enlargement of the Security Council. Besides the arithmetical criterion to which I have just referred, aspects such as the efficiency and functionality of the Security Council cannot and must not be ignored. In order to preserve the efficiency of the Council, any enlargement should be limited to a small number of additional permanent and non-permanent members. It was pointed out this morning that all of us, but especially the smaller countries, which form the majority of the membership, have a particular interest in the effectiveness of the Council.

Third, what do we think would be the optimal size for an enlarged Security Council? We believe that a possible size, both allowing efficient work and reflecting the increase in the overall membership, would range somewhere between 21 and 25, which would mean a ratio of approximately nine to one or seven to one respectively.

Fourth, in order to achieve a broad, representative character any enlargement of the Security Council must maintain a balance between permanent members and non-permanent members. Thus, enlargement cannot be limited to one category of membership in the Security Council. Equally, any enlargement has to strike a balance between developing and developed members.

Fifth, the choice of additional permanent members of the Security Council should certainly take into consideration their potential for making a contribution both in the political and financial domain and to the overall peace-keeping efforts of the United Nations in the broad sense of this term. Careful attention has to be paid to all the criteria mentioned in Article 23, paragraph 1 of the Charter, which requires us to pay due regard

> "to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution".

Sixth, it is often said that the Council would profit from a more democratic decision-making process. We believe that due consideration will have to be given to this matter in order to maintain the trust of the United Nations membership as a whole in the activities of the Security Council. While the abolition of the veto power seems unrealistic and would in fact reduce the relevance of Security Council decision-making, certain modifications might certainly be discussed.

My seventh point relates to the issue of the transparency of the work of the Security Council. The need for greater transparency in the work of the Security council has been generally recognized. The Council itself has already taken a number of measures, which we welcome, to increase transparency, and a working group of the Council is continuing the discussion of this issue. The widespread feeling among the membership that there is a lack of transparency results, *inter alia*, from the fact that most of the Security Council's deliberations take place either in informal consultations closed to the rest of the United Nations membership or, in an earlier stage of the decision-making process, in informal contacts between small groups of interested Security Council members. There is no established mechanism for informing the rest of the United Nations membership about the outcome of these consultations.

In this context, it has to be stated that an increase in the Security Council's membership is not in itself going to remedy the lack of transparency. On the contrary, it seems more likely that an enlargement of the Council, which would make informal consultations of the whole more cumbersome, might relegate the decision-making process further to small subgroups or informal contact groups among interested members of the Security Council - in

hardly decrease. A flow of information from such informal contacts will be even more difficult to achieve than before, a problem that might even concern some of the non-permanent Council members not taking part in the early stages of the deliberations.

Therefore, any increase in membership should be accompanied by measures to increase transparency in the work of the Security Council. One possible solution could be stronger interaction between Security Council members and the countries belonging to their respective regional groups. There should be a clear understanding that the countries elected to or serving permanently on the Security Council have an obligation to keep the other members of their regional group informed on an ongoing basis.

In order to improve the effectiveness of its work, the Security Council should also try to consult more actively on specific conflicts with concerned States not members of the Security Council.

My eighth point is that in order to ensure closer cooperation and interaction between the Security Council and countries providing troops for peace-keeping operations, it has been suggested that working groups be created under Article 29 of the Charter on matters relating to the various peace-keeping operations - working groups in which the respective troop-contributing countries and other particularly interested States could participate. We feel that such a measure would reflect the importance given to participation in peace-keeping operations and might also constitute an incentive to Governments to take decisions to provide contingents.

Those were some basic remarks from our delegation at this stage of this important debate. We stand ready to work actively together with all other delegations in the working group that will be set up, and we will support the draft resolution which we understand will be put forward by the President to establish the appropriate procedure that should guide us through further deliberations on this subject.

Mr. WLOSOWICZ (Poland): The question of equitable representation on and increase of the membership of the Security Council is of utmost importance to the future of the United Nations and its role in maintaining international peace and security. During the last 20 years, discussions on this subject have been held at the various forums of the United Nations. With the lapse of time, the question of the membership in the Security Council and the powers of its members has been gaining more and more topicality. However, the political climate of the cold war era was not conducive to introducing substantial changes to the system envisaged by the founders of the United Nations.

It was the disappearance of bipolarity and of traditional ideological barriers that brought about increasing pressure to restructure the United Nations and to make it more democratic, as well as to adapt the Organization to the needs of the contemporary world. This applies in particular to the Security Council, whose ability successfully to discharge its mandate as set forth by the Charter has considerably increased.

On the other hand, despite the positive developments of the last four years, the appearance of certain negative phenomena which could be called side-effects of the post-cold-war transformation has made it crucial for the Security Council to function in an even more efficient and effective manner.

As Poland stressed in its reply concerning the "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council",

> "Poland supports all efforts aimed at strengthening the role of the United Nations and enhancing its effectiveness and efficiency. A vast untapped potential in this regard is still embodied in the United Nations Charter itself. ... the Charter should be implemented consistently, and its application adapted to these realities and challenges of the contemporary world. This includes the possibility of considering an adjustment of the structures and functions of the United Nations, including its main organs [in particular the Security Council] as necessary." (*A/48/264/Add.1, p. 15*)

Poland is ready to take an active part in considering the proposals aimed at accommodating the United Nations structures and mechanisms, especially the Security Council, to the changing international situation and to the substantial increase in the membership of the Organization. Poland therefore takes a constructive approach with regard to the aspirations of those Member States that might markedly increase their contribution to the attainment of the objectives of the Organization if they were offered an enhanced status within the Security Council.

In the view of the Polish delegation, any expansion of the membership of the Security Council must not endanger its effectiveness. Also, it must not put in jeopardy the Council's ability to discharge its functions and powers. Here I am referring *inter alia* to the special responsibility of the permanent members and the existing status of non-permanent members of the Council. The well-established decision-making procedures should be

maintained. It must also be ensured that every regional group recognized in the United Nations is fairly represented in the Council, that the aspirations and interests of medium-sized States are met and that due attention is given to their political role in the region.

As it is rightly stressed in the preamble to the draft resolution under review, no effort should be spared to build a consensus on the issue under consideration. If adopted, the draft resolution should be seen as the beginning of the very important, but difficult and complex, process of forging an eventual agreement. We support the draft resolution, for it gives us a sufficiently broad and flexible framework to consider all the relevant issues.

We hope that, in the end, the Security Council will be better equipped to cope, on behalf of the international community, with its primary task of maintaining international peace and security and facing any challenge ahead.

Mr. SARDENBERG (Brazil): The agenda item we are addressing today is emblematic of the new international atmosphere and of the renewed role the United Nations is expected to play in it.

In response to resolution 47/62, more than 70 Governments have submitted their observations concerning the "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council". The general debate at this session of the General Assembly and the debate we are now holding also constitute relevant contributions to the consideration of this important issue. I believe it would be safe to say that we are already quite close to consensus on the idea that the membership of the Security Council should be increased in order to make it more representative of the membership at large, in view of the new realities in international life. It is our view that better representation will lead to a more democratic Security Council.

A number of States have stressed the point that, in order to preserve the efficiency of the Council, the increase in its membership should be extremely limited, the assumption being that the smaller the group, the more efficient it would be as a decision-making body. However, we should avoid the attraction of oversimplified correlations. A moderate expansion of the composition of the Council would not necessarily lessen its efficiency. Nor is it true that a smaller Council would necessarily be more efficient.

The exponential increase in the number of resolutions and other decisions adopted by the Council in recent times has created the impression of a new efficiency in its functioning. But we should be mindful of the difference between quantity and quality. Decisions taken too hastily, without a thorough and sober reflection on their multiple repercussions and without the benefit of a wider process of consultation, may lead to unforeseen or undesired results. Decisions involving questions of crucial concern to different States or groups of States need to be carefully considered from all relevant angles and perspectives.

In this regard, a more representative Council, reflecting the variety of resources and potential contributions of different States, as well as the complexities of different regions, would be better equipped to assess, in an efficient manner, ways and means to settle the multiple situations arising in different quarters of the globe.

The report of the Secretary-General of 20 July 1993 (A/48/264 and Add.1, Add.2/Corr.2, Add.3 and Add.4) contains a wealth of thoughtful comments from Member States on the subject of further enhancing the efficiency of the Council. These comments should serve as a relevant basis for consideration by the open-ended working group that we hope to see established by the General Assembly at this session.

The task of this working group will be most challenging. It will be entrusted with preparing recommendations on how to bring about, in a practical and timely way, an increase in the membership of the Security Council on the basis of equitable representation.

If the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security is to be preserved and enhanced, there is a need to match the expectations of the international community with regard to the ability of the Council to respond to them. In this connection, there is a growing awareness of the crucial relationship between a more appropriate composition of the Council and the improvement of its efficiency. A more representative and balanced structure would not only reinforce the authority of the Council in carrying out the difficult tasks placed before it but also be in keeping with the prevailing democratic spirit.

There should be an appropriate proportion between the size of the Council and that of the entire membership of the Organization. The different categories of members of the Council should be adequately balanced. The main regions of the world should be adequately represented in the different categories of members of the Council. And due regard should be paid to the capability of members to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization.

The surge of ever-more-complex conflict situations in the post-cold-war era requires that this exercise should be addressed with care, but also with a sense of urgency. We note in this regard that the working group is expected to submit a report on the progress of its work before the end of the current session of the General Assembly, in September 1994.

In view of the complexity of the questions involved, it may be possible that consideration of all relevant aspects will not have been exhausted by then. None the less, it is our expectation that all Member States will dedicate intensive and constructive efforts towards advancing as far as possible on the subject.

As the Secretary-General points out in his report on the work of the Organization,

> "The question of the Security Council's membership structure is of crucial importance ...". *(A/48/1, para. 40)*

Like the Secretary-General, Brazil believes that it would be most timely if the issue were to be resolved by the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization.

In closing, I should like to recall the views expressed on this subject in the general debate of the current session of the General Assembly by the Minister of External Relations of Brazil, Ambassador Celso Amorim:

> "We note with satisfaction the establishment of a virtual consensus on the need to update the composition of the Security Council. It is our understanding that the growing role of the Council in matters which affect the fundamental interests of Member States corresponds to the need to ensure a more representative composition, and so enhance the Council's legitimacy and its efficiency. The reform of the Council must be achieved in such a way as not to aggravate further the imbalance between developed and developing countries in the decision-making process of the United Nations. The General Assembly, as the definitive democratic organ within the United Nations system, must play a decisive role in shaping that process." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 4th meeting, p. 4)*

Mr. ELHOUDERI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: Following the end of the cold war, the world has witnessed numerous changes. Although the results of such changes have not taken final form yet it is quite certain that a new reality does exist and that that new reality has taken the shape of a much enlarged United Nations whose membership has risen to such an extent that it has become necessary to reconsider its structures and its major organs, especially the Security Council whose composition must reflect the new reality of the enlarged United Nations membership on whose behalf it acts, as stipulated by Article 24 of the Charter.

In addition, there are several other reasons which make it necessary to increase the membership of the Security Council:

Firstly, the principal role the Security Council has come to play in international affairs and the far-reaching effects of its resolutions on the Member States. None of this can elicit satisfaction or evoke acceptance unless there is a greater degree of participation by the States Members that ensures the adoption of Security Council resolutions through wider participation by and more equitable representation of the Organization's membership.

Secondly, the present composition of the Security Council is not consonant with paragraph 1 of Article 23 of the Charter, which stipulates that due regard shall be paid in determining the membership of the Council to the principle of equitable geographical distribution. The Security Council's present composition is not in line with this principle as a single geographic group monopolizes the greatest number of seats at the expense of the other geographic groups.

Thirdly, the United Nations at the present time is undergoing a phase of radical reform that is almost total in its scope. The General Assembly has reduced the number of its committees and persistent efforts are being deployed to reform and restructure the United Nations in the social, economic and other related spheres. It is only logical that such reforms should embrace the Security Council, the organ that performs a principal role in United Nations activities, namely the maintenance of international peace and security.

In the general debate that took place during the last session of the General Assembly, my delegation defined its position on the issue of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. My delegation was among those who sponsored resolution 47/62 adopted by the General Assembly and was in the forefront of those who commented on it. The present debate by the General Assembly provides us with an opportunity to reaffirm yet again the position that we have already taken in this respect.

Our comments on resolution 47/62 fundamentally stressed that any increase in the membership of the Security Council should not be partial or biased in favour

of a certain group of the Organization's membership. We stressed that the increase should ensure representation of Member States on the Security Council in conformity with the principle of equitable geographical distribution and guarantee the Security Council's effectiveness in performing the role mandated to it by the Charter.

Here I should like to state that my delegation rejects any tendency to obstruct the increase of the Security Council's membership under the pretext that such increase would impede the Council's functioning or limit its effectiveness.

Just as we attach great importance to the issue of equitable representation on the Security Council, we attach the same importance to reforming the Council and to improving its procedures. That is why my delegation has presented definite proposals to the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization. In line with those proposals, we believe that it is of the greatest importance for the efforts being deployed towards increasing the Security Council's membership to be accompanied by an examination of the ways and means whereby the Council's working methods may be improved and all the obstacles that impede its proper functioning may be eliminated so that it may perform the role mandated to it by the Charter.

My delegation is aware of the recent proposals by the Council in document S/26176. However we think that those proposals are insufficient. We believe that there is a clear case for introducing other measures that would ensure transparency in the work of the Council. In particular, consultations must be held concerning the draft resolutions proposed for adoption; also, the States concerned must be allowed to participate fully in those consultations in order for them to be able to adequately express their views and positions.

In addition, the Council must find a way to inform United Nations Member States properly of the results of its consultations. Informal consultations now represent the bulk of the Council's work and figure prominently in the adoption of its resolutions. This may be said to be helpful to the Council in reaching speedy agreement. However, my delegation finds that the increased exclusivity of such consultations, which have become a kind of private club for certain privileged members, is harmful to the functioning of the Council as certain permanent members of the Council have exploited this method to impose their will and achieve their purposes. Thus, such States have made of the Security Council an organ that no longer deals with international issues according to the will of the majority of United Nations Member States, but rather in line with the designs and special interests of certain States.

My country has consistently advocated the reviewing of certain texts that govern the activities of the Security Council and, in particular, the veto privilege. This stance stems from belief in a fundamental principle, namely the principle of equal sovereignty which this privilege negates. There is also the fact that there is no longer any justification for retaining that privilege. The circumstances under which it was granted, almost 50 years ago, no longer exist. Many new States have emerged on the international scene, while old colonial empires have disappeared with their designs and their special interests.

The events of the past 40 years have shown that the right of veto has in fact frustrated many efforts that aimed at settling disputes and at promoting international security. The truth of the matter is that this privilege has developed into a real obstacle to the role mandated to the Security Council, namely the maintenance of international peace and security. The cases in which recourse was made to the veto have demonstrated that it has been used, in most cases, not in the service of principles, but in the service of special interests. We are aware that the veto has not been used over the past few years. However, we should warn that this is no guarantee that it will not be used again, especially if one of the veto States becomes party to a dispute.

We are seeing a revival of the role of the United Nations. Its burdens are increasing as the international community seeks to correct the imbalances of the international order and tries to lay the foundations of a new order of justice and equality that would embrace all the States Members of the United Nations. We believe that these aspirations will never be realized so long as the functioning of the Security Council, which has the principal mandate of maintaining international peace and security remains hostage to the dictates of one State that has the power to veto its resolutions whenever it has to. That is why the call for reforming the Council and removing the impediments that obstruct its proper functioning is widening and gaining momentum. All this shows that the time has come to reconsider certain provisions of the Charter, in particular the provision dealing with the right of veto, a right that should be abolished or, at least, strictly restricted.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to assert once again that the question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council is an urgent matter for the reasons I have stated as well as for the other reasons set out by previous speakers in this debate. At the same time, my delegation reaffirms that it is of the greatest importance for the Security Council to work in a manner that is compatible with the principles of the Charter and with the mandate entrusted to it by the Charter, without in any way

infringing upon the mandates of other international organs. In so doing, the Security Council should adopt an objective approach and should never opt for double standards or selectivity in dealing with the issues it deals with. There are many instances that show that the Council opted for a discriminatory approach whereby it insisted, in certain cases, on the enforcement of its resolutions while, in other cases, it showed no such determination, even in the face of naked defiance of its authority.

My delegation should like to reaffirm that there is a pressing need for reconsidering the Security Council's membership and for reforming its procedures. We do hope that this will take place by the advent of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, so that the Organization may gain new momentum and a new vision in striving for the achievement of its objectives.

Mr. QADER (Bangladesh): The international political landscape has gone through a sea of changes since the establishment of the United Nations. The United Nations, as an international organization of Member States of the global community, is nearing its fiftieth year with the attainment of near universality of its membership. The nature and content of the changes in international relations have been in one respect so positive that today the Members of the United Nations not only find Article 107 and parts of Articles 53 and 77 of the United Nations Charter redundant, but are thinking of according the objects of these Articles a special role in the United Nations itself.

Thematically, the world today is being swept by the egalitarian and humanizing impacts of democratic concepts and practices. The last hardened vestiges of trade barriers are being dismantled to pave the way for genuine free trade. And there is an acknowledged preference for and reliance on multilateral negotiations to transform this complex world of diverse communities into a global village of amity in a mosaic of cultural diversity. These can be times of great developments and beneficial changes, provided we keep the fundamental purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter in the proper perspective and do not deviate from them.

When the United Nations rose like a phoenix from the ruins of the League of Nations and through the ashes of the Second World War, the foremost human concern was rightly embedded in upholding the concepts of peace and security. The Security Council was accordingly created by the framers of the United Nations to work as the prime instrument for maintaining international peace and security so that its other organs might go about their work in an enabling environment of peace and security, the lack of which had haunted humanity over previous centuries.

The concept of permanent membership with veto powers was a recognition of the imperatives of that time and the pressing need to maintain international peace and security. Today, nearly 50 years later, with an abundance of varied experiences of success and failure, the international community is in a position to review and reform the role of various United Nations organs, and particularly that of the Security Council, in the light of the current global *elan* of democratic aspirations and the near universality of the Organization's membership, with a view to making it more democratic, representative, effective, efficient and credible to the peoples of the world.

The Security Council in 1945 had a membership of 11, including five permanent members, out of a total membership of 51, giving it a ratio of one to nearly five members of the General Assembly. In 1965, when membership reached 113, the Security Council had 15 members - a ratio of one Security Council member to almost seven and a half members of the General Assembly. Today, therefore, there is an imperative need for a commensurate expansion of the Security Council. We have no specific suggestions on what its new strength should be, but we believe that a ratio of one to eight would be fair, without compromising the Council's effectiveness. But we should go about this process in an equitable manner, considering all relevant factors necessary in an expansion of such a nature.

The increase in the membership of the Security Council would be only one aspect of its democratic transformation. The other essential aspect of democratization would be to ensure the transparency of its work and its accountability to the General Assembly. Accordingly, we call for changes in its current procedures for reporting to the Assembly and for the suitable reform of these procedures, including the presentation of summary records of its proceedings to the General Assembly.

We are aware of the burning democratic aspirations of "the peoples of the United Nations" and thus do not call for the immediate abolition of the power of veto, but we believe that fixing a timetable for its gradual elimination would be very desirable, especially when some permanent members are losing the heart to face the fires of conflicts and when some are using their veto power, or the threat to use it, to prevent others from carrying out the objectives of the Charter. Since democracy is a sacrosanct concept for us, we cannot accept any addition to the privileged class of those with veto power, nor would we consider creating a new class of semi-permanent or permanent members without veto power to be a democratic and positive step, as such a measure obviously would be undemocratic and elitist.

We believe that the prerequisite for retaining or earning membership in the Security Council should be the performance - and the performance alone - of the candidates in their commitment to upholding the stated purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, and, more specifically, their role in upholding the objectives and principles laid out in Articles 23, 24 and 26 of the Charter. In fact, we should devise a way to evaluate the track record of performance by Members of the United Nations.

Considering the irresistible push for democratization of the United Nations organs and the equally important need to get the job done in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, we think that the time has come urgently to form an open-ended working group to look into different aspects of the reform of the Security Council, as has been suggested by some of the previous speakers. That group should submit its report to the Secretary-General at the earliest possible time, preferably by the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, so that the fiftieth session can usher in a reformed Security Council, in time for the golden jubilee of the United Nations.

Those were our preliminary observations on the very important subject of the Security Council, on whose credibility, effective and efficient functioning depends the security of Member States - especially that of the weaker ones.

Mr. SHAHID (Maldives): Fundamental changes have taken place on the international scene since the founding of the United Nations. We have witnessed the end of the cold war, which was itself a legacy of the Second World War - the war that led to the formation of this Organization. Several territories under colonial rule have emerged as new States. Other States that were part of a union, such as the Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia, have become independent. These nations have now joined this Organization, taking us further in our common endeavour to make the United Nations universal.

The United Nations is on the threshold of its fiftieth anniversary. There can be no doubt that the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter are as valid today as they were in 1945, notwithstanding the fact that the character of the world has substantially altered since then. However, many of the organs required to preserve the Charter are in need of reform and restructuring. These reforms should reflect the changes that have taken place internationally and should be aimed at making these organs more responsive to current realities.

In this connection, restructuring and reforming the Security Council has become imperative. The Security Council is the United Nations organ with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In recent years it has become evident that the Security Council can in fact function in the manner originally intended by the authors of the Charter. No doubt, the end of the cold war and of ideological politics was the major contributor. These developments on the international security scene came as reassurance to the smaller countries of the international community. Regrettably, however, the high level of credibility which the Council managed to gain in the immediate aftermath of the cold war and the Gulf war was short-lived. This, perhaps, is partly due to the Council's inability to function consistently on all issues and partly due to the fact that the membership of the Council does not reflect the dramatic changes that have taken place internationally.

In 1946 the United Nations had 51 Members, of which six were non-permanent members of the Security Council. The non-permanent membership of the Council was expanded in 1963 to 10 to correspond to the increase in the membership of the Organization to 113. Today, the membership of the United Nations totals 184. My Government feels that once again the membership of the Council should be increased to reflect the change. However, the utmost caution and circumspection should be exercised in carrying out such a process. It will be a most critical reform process, one on which the future of this Organization depends, and will involve the most fundamental aspects of its purposes and functions.

Maldives is of the view that any expansion in the membership of the Security Council and its status should be based on the principle of equitable and balanced representation. Such an expansion should be carried out in a manner which will assist in increasing the Council's moral authority by giving the small and medium-sized States a greater opportunity to participate in its work as well. The reform process should also ensure the enhancement of the Council's efficiency. In this regard, my delegation endorses the establishment of an open-ended working group to adequately address all issues, including the formulation of the basis or criteria for selection of any new members.

The question of permanent members and the right of veto is a key issue. In addressing that issue, we have to fully understand that privileges come with additional responsibilities and obligations. As the Security Council is the organ of the United Nations with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, its members, especially the permanent ones, should be willing to accept additional responsibilities and obligations in that connection and in making the United Nations more effective and efficient. It is important to

highlight the fact that the question of the permanent members and the right of veto should be addressed without prejudice to the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of the Council.

Small States are a reality of the family of nations today. My delegation recognizes that small States are particularly vulnerable to external threats and acts of interference in their internal affairs and that such States have special needs consonant with the right to sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. The best guarantee for the security of small States lies in the Charter of the United Nations, which assigns the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security to the Security Council. Therefore, small States, such as mine, have an inherent interest in ensuring an effective and efficient Security Council.

We should be careful not to approach the question of reforming and restructuring the Security Council in a piecemeal fashion and should be firm in our refusal to accept suggestions for changes of a cosmetic nature. We should formulate principled criteria that would reflect the political, economic and demographic realities of the world today. My delegation calls upon all States to engage constructively in this process with a degree of flexibility and in a spirit of compromise and willingness to work towards consensus. On behalf of my delegation, I assure the Assembly that we will extend our full cooperation in order to achieve this end.

Mr. VENECIA (Philippines): I wish to join other delegations in thanking the Secretary-General for the timely presentation of his report (A/48/264) on this agenda item, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 47/62.

The Philippines believes the time has come for serious reflection and debate on the related issues of the reform and the expansion of the membership of the Security Council. It is a fact that the Security Council remains the least representative and least democratic of the principal organs of the United Nations. While other principal organs and bodies of the United Nations are actively seeking to restructure or revitalize themselves in order to respond to a changing world, the rising tide of democracy and growing United Nations membership, the Council's structure and decision-making procedures have not been significantly adapted or reformed, despite the fact that the Council has never been more active and assertive than it is today.

We therefore look forward to the adoption of a decision establishing an open-ended working group to examine key aspects of this issue in the framework of Articles 23 and 24 of the Charter.

In this regard, the Philippines, in its response to the Secretary-General's request, stated that it welcomed a comprehensive exchange of views on this matter. I stress the word "comprehensive" because any discussion of expanded membership of the Council will inevitably have a bearing on the interrelated issues of the Council's methods of work, enhancement of the effectiveness and transparency of its functioning, and improved accountability to and coordination with the General Assembly.

At this stage, my delegation believes that the following matters related to the Security Council should be fully taken into account when considering the question of increasing the Council's membership.

Inasmuch as the Council acts on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations in matters pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security, it is imperative that Council decisions, which have a bearing on international peace and security, have the support and confidence of the general membership. This is the only way to ensure the credibility of the Council's decisions and actions. Hence, any decision on increasing the membership of the Council must be conducive to the fulfilment of this need. Failure to do so would eventually weaken the Council's moral authority and effectiveness.

Another means of enhancing the Council's moral authority would be to ensure that its actions relating to peace and security conform to the purposes and principles of the Charter. To be precise, they should abide by, and not go beyond, the mandate of the Charter, specifically under Chapter I. Above all, the Council's decisions should reflect the will of the Member States and should not create the impression that they serve as geopolitical instruments for projecting the interests of a limited group of Member States.

An expanded Council should act decisively and in a timely fashion. However, one should not necessarily equate efficiency with smaller numbers. Effectiveness or efficiency results when all actors cooperate fully and share responsibilities, as appropriate, with a view to achieving a specific objective. Once again, this involves, essentially, enhancing the trust and confidence of Member States in the Council. Without trust, it is difficult to conceive of an effective Council.

The Philippines is prepared to discuss any proposal on criteria for new members, though we maintain that a key criterion for new membership should be equitable

geographical representation. This is the most fundamental democratic basis for membership.

It is important that any increased membership in the Council should duly reflect the increasing membership of the United Nations. We are prepared to exchange ideas on the appropriate size and categories of membership, including, if appropriate, new categories. In so doing, we shall be guided by consideration of whatever size will lead to improved functioning and transparency of the Council.

We believe any increase in the membership of the Council should also be accompanied by greater involvement and participation on the part of non-members in the Council's decision-making process, through more open, more transparent, more regular and structured consultations between Council members and the General Assembly. The present informal and closed consultations should be replaced by an open-ended structure.

There is an urgent need to improve coordination between the Security Council and the General Assembly on matters relating to international peace and security. This would lead to greater balance in the work of these organs on such issues.

A general debate on the veto power - the need for it, modification or use of it, particularly in the context of an expanded membership of the Council - would also be useful.

Ultimately, the reform and expansion of the membership of the Council should be viewed in the larger context of the ongoing process of the democratization, revitalization and restructuring of the United Nations in response to new international realities. Moreover, given the interlinkages of the principal United Nations organs, in both the institutional and the political sense, changes in one organ will eventually have substantive effects on others. It would therefore be crucial to take these interrelationships into account.

While we concern ourselves with ways and means of reinforcing and improving the structure and machinery of the Security Council, it would be well and timely for us to give serious thought to the scarcely mentioned but chronic and nettling problem of investing the United Nations with visible and credible police power for effectively maintaining international peace and security. The Security Council makes policy decisions on issues and problems of international peace and order. It renders fateful and crucial decisions on United Nations intervention in armed conflicts. It commits the Organization to enforcement action; yet it is woefully bereft of such power. This matter is central to the collective security system, which has been placed under the auspices of the United Nations by world public opinion, history and tradition, and it alone holds out hope of defence against aggression to small and defenceless nations.

In one of the great debates in the session of the United Nations General Assembly held in Paris in 1948, two eminent Asian diplomats and statesmen took turns arguing that the United Nations must have commensurate police power to perform its primary mission, which is to keep peace. I invoke today the memory of General Carlos P. Romulo and Dr. Adam Malik to focus attention on a geopolitical imperative the United Nations can ignore only at its peril.

We believe that a complex and challenging task lies ahead. Any decision on this subject should be adopted only after thorough consideration by Member States and should fully address the issues I have just raised. This is the only way to ensure a meaningful, fair and equitable result; this is the only way our debate can move forward.

Mr. CARDENAS (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council", which was introduced in 1979 by several delegations including that of the Republic of Argentina, has generated an unusual degree of activity this year.

This of course reflects the changes that are taking place in international relations. Today, we are still actors in the quest for a new international balance based, we believe, on factors which are promising in the sense that the international community can take full advantage of them.

In the last four years, this Organization has had to confront a number of crises which affected international peace and security. Many of these crises have been defused by the action of the Security Council and the commitment of the international community to provide the human and economic resources to the effort to maintain international peace and security.

Last year we unanimously adopted resolution 47/62, which made it possible for States Members of the United Nations to submit to the Secretary-General their written observations on the question of a possible revision of the composition of the Security Council. These replies, including that of the Republic of Argentina, are contained in document A/48/264 and its addenda.

The replies - which varied considerably and often contained innovative suggestions that we shall in due course consider in the working group to be set up -

demonstrate, on the other hand, a common concern among the Members of our Organization: a desire to improve and strengthen the effectiveness of the organ entrusted with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

It is difficult to imagine that we can make any progress in our consideration of this item without studying a series of related aspects to a change in the membership of the Council that serve to strengthen that principal organ within the framework established by the United Nations Charter.

The position of the Republic of Argentina, which is contained in the aforementioned reply submitted pursuant to resolution 47/62, can be summarized as follows:

First, pursuant to the Charter, we advocate an increase in the number of non-permanent members that would ensure adequate representation of Member States and an equitable geographic distribution among all regions, without prejudice to the Council's flexibility or efficiency or diminishing its effectiveness.

Secondly, we believe that any reform of the United Nations Charter and, in this specific case, any reform designed eventually to restructure the Security Council, must be carried out on the basis of a broad and solid consensus.

We are already aware of the general framework of the draft resolution which would set up an open-ended working group to consider all aspects of the question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to that organ.

We believe that, among others, the following criteria which are included in that framework should duly be taken into account in future work on this matter: first, the need to continue improving the effectiveness of the Council; second, recognition that the Council, in exercising its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, acts on behalf of all Members; third, the selection criteria explicitly set out in Article 23 of the Charter; fourth, the principle of sovereign equality of States as stipulated in Article 2 of the Charter; and, fifth, recognition of the importance of achieving general agreement.

Beginning next year, we shall embark upon an intense but fascinating task - and without rushing but without resting - within the framework of a wide-ranging debate in which all Member States can unhesitatingly express their points of view, and in successive steps arrive at a consensual agreement which will fashion an ordered, egalitarian and equitable Security Council to confront effectively the challenges of this new age.

My delegation undertakes to participate actively and constructively in the working group to be established - giving priority, of course, to our national interests together with those of our region.

Mr. LAMAMRA (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): On the initiative of a limited number of countries, among which I am happy to mention Algeria and Guyana, the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security was inscribed on the agenda of the General Assembly in 1979. This appeal by the international community, which was timely then and is even more so today, has for 12 years gone for the most part unheeded, for reasons which there is no need to go into here but which can easily be linked, in part, to the conflictive political atmosphere during the cold war period.

It was not until its forty-sixth session, in 1991, that the General Assembly was able to hold its first debate on this important issue, a debate which gave rise to a remarkable resurgence of interest in the problem of the expansion of the Security Council and which triggered a dynamic process of individual and collective reflection by Member States on the action to be taken. That dynamic process, which gave rise to much creativity and numerous proposals, was expressed with particular eloquence in the Secretary-General's report through a considerable number of observations and suggestions by Member States, on which the General Assembly should build in order to move ahead in harmony and with clarity.

The first conclusion to be drawn from this report has to do with the unusually high number of States that have felt it necessary to make their views on this question known. An analysis of the answers received from Member States clearly shows general agreement in favour of increasing the number of members of the Security Council, which thus becomes a well-established need. The arguments put forward in favour of such an increase generally overlap, since they are based simultaneously on the need for the composition of the Security Council to reflect a satisfactory ratio with the increase in the number of States Members of the United Nations and on the need to respond to the widely expressed wish for greater participation which would make the Security Council more representative so that it can be in a better position to act, in accordance with Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, on behalf of the States Members of the Organization that have entrusted it with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Soh (Republic of Korea), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Small States - States like mine - are in the best position to be the moral conscience of our institution, as, historically, they have had a tangential material interest in the outcome of many disputes brought before the Council. But of greater importance is the fact that the survival of small States will depend on our having a representative Security Council. If small States are to be assured of more than passive-spectator status in this parliament of parliaments, the criteria for membership of the Security Council cannot make reference to economic clout or population size.

Antigua and Barbuda could not, therefore, be a party to any consensus resolution that implicitly conditioned membership on size and/or economic worth. We have sacrificed much to secure this sovereignty, and we shall do everything in our power to ensure its continuance. The role of the Security Council in ensuring our sovereignty cannot be discounted.

My delegation is of the view that if we are to safeguard for small States an active role in the Security Council, and if we are to ensure equitable geographical representation, the distribution of the membership of an enlarged Council should be along the following lines: for the African States, one permanent and six non-permanent seats; for the Asian States, two permanent and three non-permanent seats; for the Eastern European States, one permanent and two non-permanent seats; for the Latin American and Caribbean States, one permanent and three non-permanent seats; and for the Western European and other States, three permanent and three non-permanent seats.

With a membership of 25, the Security Council could thus be deemed equitably representative of the various regional and geographical groups that comprise the General Assembly. At the same time, its composition would allow for the participation, during each meeting, of States of varying sizes and from different regions. We believe that this distribution would be fair and just and that the institution would still be very manageable.

We hope that these changes can be instituted during the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: General Assembly resolution 47/62 was the point of departure for this fundamental process of reforming the Security Council. Colombia was a sponsor of that resolution, and we believe that, indeed, it represented explicit recognition by the international community of the need to reform the Council and to restate various questions relating to its mandate and its functioning.

Today the United Nations has 184 Members, as opposed to the 51 original States that signed the San Francisco Charter and the 113 Members of 1963. The political, economic and military realities that predominated during the post-war period were fundamentally different from those of today. That situation served as the basis for the composition of the Council in 1945 and for the exceptional prerogative of the privileged right of veto - unique in multilateral organizations - for the countries that were victorious in the Second World War. The truth is that, today, some of those countries have completely lost the political, economic and military importance that was used to justify their privileged position at that time.

Colombia welcomes with optimism the new era of cooperation that is evident here at the United Nations, but we are concerned at the fact that the paralysis that characterized the Security Council during the cold-war era seems to have given way to activity that recognizes no limits or restrictions.

The current permanent membership of the Security Council includes States that should not be permanent members, while States that should be permanent members are not included. Colombia therefore considers it necessary that the Council be reformed. In our view, it is timely and relevant for the General Assembly to begin consideration of the various aspects of such a reform. We believe that specific formulas in this connection should be submitted before 1995.

I should like to refer briefly to some of the aspects that should be studied - for example, the membership of the Council, the right of veto, the functioning of the Council, and the Council's relationship with other organs and with Members of the Organization.

A balanced increase in the membership of the Security Council has now become an imperative, given the international realities. Such an increase should reflect the number of States that are now Members of the Organization and the realities of the new international situation in all its aspects, and the distribution should be fair to all the existing regional groups. In any event, the developing countries must be adequately represented.

It seems to us that the criteria set forth in Article 23 of the Charter are still fully viable, as they are broad and flexible - a fact that reflects the wisdom of those who drafted the Charter. Any change in the membership of the Council must be balanced. In other words, an increase for

some regions only would be contrary to the criteria to which I have referred and would be contrary to the spirit that should prevail in any revision of the Charter.

The veto privilege was controversial from the very beginning - not only because it is contrary to the principle of the sovereign equality of States but also because it is a mechanism of non-cooperation in a system of collective security where cooperation is a requirement. In San Francisco, Colombia voted against the veto because we regarded it as contrary to the spirit of cooperation between nations, which was a fundamental prerequisite of the Charter in 1945.

Today the veto has lost its *raison d'être*. In any case, an increase in the membership of the Security Council must not be used to justify additional members with the power of veto. In the current situation, that would be unjustifiable. It would be contrary to the progressive spirit of democratization that must inspire this new era of the United Nations. Clearly, any change in the voting procedure - including the veto - is subject to the majorities set forth in the Charter and confirmed in the Security Council's rules of procedure. It is because the relevant Articles of the Charter have no basis in the world of today that the question of their revision arises. In this regard, flexibility and consensus among the permanent members will, of course, be decisive. In the absence of such flexibility and consensus, the international community could even question the very authority of the Security Council.

Obviously some hesitation has been felt in various quarters because of the need to preserve the Council's effectiveness. That legitimate concern, which the Algerian delegation fully shares, should not, however, because of some unfortunate antagonism between "effectiveness" and "representation", rule out plans to expand the Council. It would be far more fruitful to view those two premises as complementary, in the sense that a Security Council with a suitably expanded membership would better represent the diversity of the Organization's Member States and would therefore be taking its decisions in harmony with the general will of the Member States. That would obviously contribute to obtaining widespread adherence to those decisions and, thereby, to improving the effectiveness of the Council itself.

Algeria has expressed its views, contained in document A/48/264/Add.1, on a set of parameters and factors it views as part of the overall problem of equitable representation on the Security Council, as well as on the related factors that would be involved in a timely and positive effort to reform the way the Council functions and improve its relationships with other principal United Nations organs.

In the framework of this debate I should like to emphasize the following guidelines to be borne in mind in any exercise of collective thinking on the subject of achieving equitable representation on the Security Council, which would mark a new point of departure for the United Nations.

First, in contrast to the selective steps taken in 1963 to 1965 in a context of East-West antagonism and at a time when the decolonization process was speeding up, the reform of the Security Council required by today's world and tomorrow's needs must be based both on the near-universality of the United Nations and on such key factors as the indivisible nature of international peace and security, the clear interdependence of economic systems and the strengthening of multilateralism on the global and regional levels, as well as on the variety of ways in which States can contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security beyond the basic contributions inherent in their economic and military capabilities.

Secondly, contrary to the approach that obtained in the aftermath of the Second World War, it is important today not to give in to the temptation to consecrate, through an expansion of the Security Council, present-day power relationships but, rather, to seek to work out a system of representation that does not marginalize the Southern Hemisphere of the planet.

Thirdly, given the marked trend towards an ever-increasing use of consensus in the functioning of the Security Council, certain institutional vestiges of the past, such as the veto power, should be reviewed in the light of the new requirements created by the democratization of the Organization, rather than consolidated and extended by renewing its legitimacy.

Fourthly, without prejudice to the principle of the sovereign equality of United Nations Member States, the existence of new geopolitical, regional, cultural or other groupings that contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security must be used to supplement the traditional representation by individual States with a new kind of representation by groups of States forming regional organizations or joined together by regional agreements, such as the Organization of Africa Unity and the League of Arab States, whose leaderships have already taken similar stands.

Fifthly, the concept of equitable representation on the Security Council implies that, above and beyond Council membership at a given moment, any Member State must be

able to participate in the decision-making process on questions which affect its interests or on which its views might enlighten the Council. That concept also implies that United Nations Member States, collectively represented by the General Assembly, can give guidance to the Security Council and should be in a position, by considering its reports, to evaluate its discharge of its mandate on the basis of the contractual relationship established in Article 24 of the United Nations Charter.

Lastly, that same concept of equitable representation implies some monitoring of the constitutionality of the Council's actions, and that this monitoring is within the General Assembly's competence.

The United Nations, which has through so many long years of confrontation served as the last hope of so many peoples whose faith in the institution has never wavered, now has the opportunity to make its fiftieth anniversary a high point marked both by its renewal and by its preparedness to confront the new millennium. It is thus important that we plan for it actively. A framework for work and open and transparent negotiation on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council must be established to undertake the painstaking process of reconciling differing points of view, a process that Algeria, which will participate in it, hopes will be constructive and fruitful.

Mr. HURST (Antigua and Barbuda): My delegation is compelled to add its voice to the din of proposals which have been heard from this rostrum today on the history-making question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

When Antigua and Barbuda spoke in the general debate in the General Assembly on 8 October we noted that our small island country harboured no ambitions to sit on the Security Council. Nevertheless, we considered this agenda item to be of such fundamental importance that we were compelled to express our deeply held views.

We maintain, for example, that Security Council decision-making will be the major factor in fashioning a new world order, now that the paralysis of the cold war is over. New evils will emerge to bedevil international peace and security now that the cold war, the problem of the colour bar, and colonialism have been largely conquered. The Security Council will thus have to be a very responsive, yet manageable, body, capable of reflecting and reacting firmly to new challenges while creating just and new international law.

The size of the Council would thus be a factor in its responsiveness, but so too would be its composition. We note, for example, that nearly 40 small island States are Members of this 184-nation parliament. With all due regard to the fairness of large and wealthy States whose representatives sit on the Council permanently and on a rotating basis, we believe that the interests and concerns of small States can best be articulated and promoted by one who knows first hand both the strengths and the weaknesses of smallness.

Specific proposals should be formulated, limiting the veto to decisions taken under Chapter VII, or replacing it with qualified majorities; or even overriding it by establishing an appeal mechanism through the General Assembly, with a qualified vote.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under Article 24 of the Charter, and it exercises that responsibility on behalf of all the States Members of the Organization. This implies political responsibility *vis-à-vis* the Assembly. At such a crucial moment in the history of the United Nations, the Security Council must be respected for its integrity and its effectiveness, and it is essential that its members enjoy the trust of the other States Members of the Organization. The Council's effectiveness in discharging this task depends to a large extent on the legitimacy of its decisions and the level of consistency in implementing them in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Charter.

Moreover, there is also a widespread view that the Council has gradually been expanding its powers in such a way as to encroach on the jurisdictions of other organs in the system. To that end, the Council makes use of an increasingly broad and liberal interpretation of the concept of "a threat to international peace and security". The validity of the decisions of the Council is very closely linked to their acceptance by the Member States; yet there is such controversy about its decisions and about the interpretation of the Charter that its legitimacy is being seriously challenged. Colombia stated its position on this very clearly some weeks ago, when the Assembly considered the report of the Security Council, and we believe that the General Assembly must engage in some thorough reflection on this matter.

We have also said that constant use of Chapter VII of the Charter by the Council constitutes exaggerated use, and this approach must be limited and corrected, since the Organization has tools other than force that can and should be used in finding peaceful settlements to disputes. We cannot run the risk of being associated with force, belligerency or coercion. We must, rather, be identified with the peaceful, political and diplomatic settlement of conflicts through a greater use of Chapter VI of the

Charter, which is simply preventive diplomacy. The Council must therefore exhaust those methods before having recourse to the enforcement measures provided for in the Charter as extraordinary and exceptional means.

We also have to assess the functioning of the Council, particularly in respect of the informal consultations and the transparency of its work. These informal consultations, which are secret and without records, are becoming the daily, permanent practice of the Council. While it is true that they can promote timely and speedy actions and to greater openness in national positions - a situation that could lead to better ways of achieving compromise - it is also true that their merits is exaggerated, because many of them lack the confidentiality and the political sensitivity that originally justified them. We do not believe that the effectiveness of the Council can be compromised if lesser use is made of this mechanism; on the contrary, we believe that the legitimacy of its decisions could be questioned if there were continued misuse of this practice.

In view of what I have said, Colombia believes that the General Assembly should study the matters to which I have referred with a view to submitting specific recommendations, preferably before the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Hence, we believe that establishing an open-ended working group to deal with all of these questions that have been raised is the most appropriate way of doing that. Such a group would have a broad and flexible mandate that would enable it to consider all matters relating to reform of the Council, as set out in the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/264 and Add.1-4). These include membership, functioning, and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly.

I would like to mention just a few of the factors that are of basic importance to Colombia in this process.

First, the Council's membership should be increased in order to make it better able to respond to crises and would facilitate participation by small- and medium-sized States, which are the majority of the Members of this Organization. This would enhance the Council's representative character and its moral authority.

Secondly, the Council should adhere strictly to the mandate and the spheres of competences set forth for this body in the Charter of the United Nations.

Thirdly, we should consider the possibility of establishing a body to carry out jurisdictional monitoring of the actions of the Security Council. The Council is not an organ that enjoys absolute sovereignty in carrying out its functions; it is subject to the rules and principles of international law and to the provisions of the Charter that set it up. In national systems the separation and balance of powers are generally accepted, and this approach should be taken in the international sphere. Such monitoring would not only promote the progressive development of law and an improvement would enhance the international system, but would also ensure the legality of the Council's decisions.

Fourthly, there should be an improvement in the way that the Security Council reports to the Assembly; under Article 15 of the Charter, the Council should report to the Assembly in an analytical and exhaustive manner, including through monthly reports at the time when the presidency of the Council rotates.

Fifthly, the Council should not deal with and take decisions on matters selectively, and there should be consistency in decision-making and in ensuring implementation in accordance with international law.

Lastly, there should be transparency in the Council's work, and there must be more consultations and communication between the members of the Council and the other Members of the Organization. It is essential that the members of the Council be receptive to the other Members of the United Nations, and in particular that the Council abide by, respect and comply with the resolutions of the General Assembly. Only thus can the Council maintain its credibility and integrity and that of the United Nations as a whole.

The working group thus established should meet between the sessions of the General Assembly and should report regularly to the Assembly on its activities. Colombia is willing to participate actively in such a group and to make specific proposals, out of a desire to contribute to an improved United Nations and in particular to a Security Council that is balanced, effective, legitimate and responsible.

Ms. MATHURIN MAIR (Jamaica): My delegation welcomed resolution 47/62 on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. The unanimous adoption of that resolution last year now enables this important issue to be at last considered by the General Assembly. Such consideration is long overdue.

It was 30 years ago that the General Assembly first addressed the issue of the numerical composition of the Security Council and then decided that it should be enlarged from its original membership of 11 to 15. That action was designed to reflect, in some degree, the doubling of the membership of the United Nations since its

inception, and to facilitate a more appropriate representation of the newly independent nations. In that year, 1963, there were 113 States Members of the United Nations.

The international call for a review of the composition of the Security Council appeared again on the agenda of the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session, and for over a decade since then it has been subject to deferral year after year. Today, such a review is urgent and imperative, given the present membership of 184 States and the profound changes that characterize the post-cold-war world.

New configurations, multiple crises and new agenda items all challenge conventional perceptions of security and of sovereignty, and challenge the United Nations in unprecedented ways. Within that global context, resolution 47/62 appropriately locates this item within the ongoing, system-wide process of revitalizing and restructuring the United Nations, for the world today, threatened by crises and conflicts in every region, looks to the United Nations to address the scenario of escalating disorder.

The Security Council, the paramount organ of the United Nations, should therefore provide a model of global governance. Its processes and procedures should be rational; they should be credible; they should be effective. It is as important to consider not only how that body is constituted but also how it functions.

My delegation is therefore at one with the views that have been expressed by many speakers today that the open-ended working group that is to be established to consider the issue should therefore receive a broad mandate, not limited to issues merely of enlargement - for which there is an obvious rationale - but to the Council's total *modus operandi*. It should scrutinize and advise on issues of transparency, accountability, the exercise of the veto, and, most critically, the issue of the Council's relationship with the General Assembly, the universally representative body of the world's Governments and peoples dedicated to advancing the principle of democratic participation in all aspects of its operations and from which the Council derives its power.

My delegation will participate in the work of that group, where we anticipate that all relevant issues will receive frank and constructive consideration.

I shall mention, briefly, just one such issue. On the question of equitable geographical representation, one must face squarely the issue of permanent *vis-à-vis* non-permanent membership.

With respect to the question of permanent membership, one could indeed argue, and agree, that because the maintenance of peace and security requires considerable financial and military resources which some States are better placed to provide than others, recognition of this fact has justified conferring permanent membership on those States possessing such resources and are thereby capable of undertaking special responsibilities, and one could consider that such responsibilities would also imply special status and privileges.

But an increase in permanent membership should also ensure that broader political and economic interests are better represented than they are at present. In this context, as current analyses of the multiple socio-economic and political sources of insecurity and conflict make clear, the role of regional organizations - in which many small States actively participate - becomes more important. Chapter VIII of the Charter validates this role, and "An Agenda for Peace" reaffirms the capability of regional institutions as potentially effective actors in the processes of, for example, preventive diplomacy and conflict and post-conflict resolution.

This points to the feasibility of formal recognition of regional bodies as entities to be considered for permanent seats on the Security Council.

Reforms designed to address such issues can in no way undermine the status and the functioning of the Council as an effective mechanism in the maintenance of global peace and security; on the contrary, the application of democratic values both to the composition and to the procedures of the Council can only enhance its legitimacy and its moral authority.

Finally, my delegation supports the view of those who wish to see this process completed by the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. We shall participate, with that goal in mind, as is best appropriate, keeping in mind also the overall motto of that fiftieth anniversary - "We the Peoples of the United Nations ... United for a Better World" - and we see an enhanced and more effective role for the Security Council in achieving that goal.

Mrs. FRÉCHETTE (Canada): We are about to undertake one of the most important and delicate tasks of the General Assembly at this forty-eighth session, that of considering the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

This is an important task because more than 70 Member States from all regions have expressed their interest in this issue by submitting substantial and detailed

comments to the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution 47/62, which comments we have all had the opportunity to examine.

This is also a delicate task, because this issue affects the organ of the United Nations upon which is conferred the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Canada supports the creation of an open-ended working group to consider all aspects of the question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council, and other matters related to the Council. The working group should be given a broad enough mandate to permit all Member States to raise matters of interest to them, many of which have already been expressed in their submissions to the Secretary-General or before the Assembly.

We hope, therefore, that a resolution along these lines will be adopted by consensus.

(*spoke in French*)

I will not repeat today the elements contained in Canada's submission, except to emphasize the need to proceed carefully in this exercise. Since the end of the cold war, the Security Council has enjoyed a unity and cohesion that has not been equalled since the beginnings of our Organization, but it also faces unprecedented challenges and must take decisions of crucial importance for the future. My Government believes that our efforts must result in strengthening the cohesion and effectiveness of the Security Council. It is with this in mind that we must consider its possible expansion and the relevance of improving some of its procedures.

All institutions, whatever they may be, must adapt to change in order to maintain their legitimacy and credibility on a long-term basis. The Security Council is no exception to this rule. The increase in the number of our Organization's Member States, as well as the changes that have occurred on the international scene since the first expansion of the Security Council in 1963, are the reasons most often stated, and rightly so, to justify the need to expand the membership of the Council.

The Council must thus evolve and become more representative. In this regard, we must take into account the emergence of new key players on the world stage and their ability to contribute substantially to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, as well as the necessity of equitable geographic distribution. Moreover, under the present configuration of the Council many Member States, both old and new, are no longer able to sit on the Council as often as they would like.

The question of the expansion of the Council constitutes a priority for my Government. We are taking an open-minded, constructive and flexible approach to this issue, as we must all do if our work is to be successful and its results are to receive the broadest possible support of the membership as a whole.

Let us hope that our future work will have the effect of uniting us more closely in the pursuit of our common goals - that is, especially saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war and joining forces to maintain international peace and security.

Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland): I am addressing the General Assembly on behalf of the five Nordic countries: Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland.

The Nordic Governments welcome the fact that a full-fledged debate has now been launched on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. This question forms part - a very important and central part - of the discussion which is taking place both within and outside the United Nations about how to prepare our Organization better to meet the enormous challenges of the twenty-first century. Everyone recognizes that the reform of the composition of the Security Council and related matters are important. Thus, the process ahead requires both constructive and open-minded contributions from Member States.

The Member States have in the Charter conferred upon the Security Council the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. They have also agreed that in carrying out its responsibilities the Council acts on behalf of the entire membership. These two basic Charter provisions are uncontested and remain fully valid today and in the future.

The maintenance of international peace and security has become an increasingly urgent and challenging task for the United Nations and its Member States. Therefore, the item now before the Assembly assumes particular importance. The questions which we have to address are the following: Is there a need for a review of the Security Council? What is the objective of such a review - that is, do we wish to discuss only an expansion of the membership of the Council only or do we seek more profound changes which touch on the role and responsibilities of the Council as well as its relationships with the other principal organs of the Organization? Finally, how do we proceed to bring about the change?

When we read the replies which Member States have submitted to the Secretary-General, it becomes clear that there is a very widespread recognition of the need for a change of the Security Council. There is therefore no need in this debate now to enter into the arguments which speak for or against reform. Suffice it to say that reform has become necessary as a result of the changes in global political and economic relations which, among other things, have resulted in a substantial increase in the membership of the Organization. This change in the global political scene and increase in the membership must also be reflected in the size and composition of the Security Council and in other related matters. Enhancing effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy should be the central considerations of any review of the Council and its composition.

Proceeding from the general agreement that change is called for, the next step is to try to define the objective of such a change. That objective is, in the view of the Nordic countries, fairly clear and obvious: to improve and strengthen the Council's capacity to discharge the functions which the Charter has entrusted to it. With the end of the cold war, the decision-making process of the Council has greatly improved. We see evidence of this in the exponential increase not only of the issues that the Council is seized of but also in the increase in the number of decisions taken by the Council.

When we review the composition of the Council, the question of expanding its membership is of major importance. Although there seem to be differing views on how the composition of the Council should be changed, a few common elements have clearly emerged.

First, the enlargement of the Council must be carried out in such a way as to allow it to discharge its responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security efficiently and successfully. The general view, which the Nordic countries share, is that any increase in size must take efficiency into account and must therefore be limited in scope. Wide agreement seems also to prevail that the enlargement must take into account the new political realities and that, in increasing the size of the Council, due account be taken of its members' ability and willingness to contribute politically and financially, as well as to contribute civilian and military personnel, to the implementation of the Council's decisions. This view is shared by all the Nordic countries.

Furthermore, we share the view that in the expansion account must be taken of the principle of equitable geographical representation in order to reflect adequately the membership of the United Nations itself. As can be seen from the national Nordic replies to the Secretary-General, the question of the number of permanent members whose concurring vote is needed for decisions on substantive matters is an important issue which will require careful consideration. At this stage of the discussion there is, however, no need to go further into the details concerning the specific criteria for an expansion of the Council.

While a number of Member States seem to consider that the review should concentrate on the size and composition of the Council, others are of the view that it should also encompass the question of the Council's role and responsibilities as well as its relationship to other principal organs of the Organization. The Nordic countries believe that in this situation we should all be flexible and proceed pragmatically in our future deliberations. For example, it would certainly be useful to look into the question of the transparency of the Council's proceedings. Some improvements have already emerged in this regard. On the other hand, more could be done in the interest of better involving the membership at large in the Council's work as well as the follow-up of its decisions.

Peace-keeping is a case in point. As of today, altogether, some 75 Members of the United Nations have provided personnel and logistical support for United Nations peace-keeping operations. It is only natural for those contributors that are not members of the Council to take a keen interest in collaborating with and receiving information from the Security Council on a wide range of issues related to peace-keeping. Other examples are sanctions and, of course, the financial and budgetary consequences of decisions taken by the Council. Consideration should also be given to establishing subsidiary organs of the Council in accordance with Article 29 of the Charter.

In conclusion, I should like to say a few words about the procedure. The informal consultations which have been undertaken over the past weeks will, we hope, enable the President to present a proposal that the Assembly should set up an open-ended working group to consider all aspects of the question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council. The Nordic countries are prepared to give their full support to such a proposal and pledge their active and constructive participation in this undertaking. Furthermore, we also share the view that it is important that our work be brought to a speedy conclusion, based on the widest possible agreement among the membership. That would be a worthy contribution to the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

Mr. RICHARDSON (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes this debate on Security Council enlargement. The statements made today and the comments submitted to the Secretary-General in response to last year's resolution of the General Assembly on this item show that there are many cross currents in this debate. We hope that the Assembly will shortly adopt by consensus a draft resolution that has already been the subject of much consultation.

The United Kingdom has set out its views on the enlargement of the Security Council in the comments we submitted to the Secretary-General and in my Secretary of State's statement in this Assembly on 28 September. We recognize that the increase in the membership of the United Nations has brought the possibility of increasing the membership of the Security Council, including its permanent membership, very much to the fore. In his statement, Mr. Hurd made it clear that, if there were to be consensus on enlargement of the Security Council, there are countries which, by virtue of their global interests and contribution to international peace and security, could in our view undertake the full range of responsibilities of a permanent member and should certainly be expected to do so.

I should like, if I may, to turn to the immediate task which lies before the open-ended working group that we hope will soon be established. It is clear to my delegation that, if it is to succeed, the group will need to continue to work in the spirit of consensus that has characterized the Assembly's action hitherto. It will also need to focus on the achievable if the length of its deliberations is not to be excessively prolonged.

From the wide spectrum of views expressed so far in the debate, the one message that comes through with clarity is that most members of this Organization now wish to see a limited enlargement of the Security Council. It seems to my delegation that the working group should focus primarily on that objective with the aim of submitting a report reflecting significant progress to the next session of the Assembly. It should be careful not to stray into tasks which fall to other bodies.

A number of delegations have commented in their statements today on the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly. This is of course an important question. It is a matter which is covered in depth and with great authority by the Charter itself. The President of the Security Council set out, in his statement to the Assembly on 28 October on the report of the Security Council, some of the procedural changes that the Council has recently made with the objective of increasing the transparency of its actions. That effort will need to continue, and my Government lends its full support to it. But a careful balance does need to be struck if the effectiveness of the Council is not to be adversely affected.

A fundamental point of concern for my delegation throughout the discussions in the working group and beyond will be the need to maintain the effectiveness of the Security Council at a time when it is having to respond to a massive increase in the demands put upon it. The changes which have taken place in the international situation over the past few years have for the first time enabled the Council to operate effectively as a collegiate body. As a result, the United Nations has been enabled to play the role envisaged for it on its establishment, namely as the primary means of resolving regional and other conflicts. It has assumed the position that the founding fathers intended for it at the centre of international affairs. In the debate which is just beginning - which is, as I said, one which my delegation thoroughly welcomes - we must be vigilant to safeguard the effective operation of the Council and its ability to fulfil its primary responsibility under the United Nations Charter - the maintenance of international peace and security.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.

United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

63rd PLENARY MEETING
24 November 1993 at 10 a.m.
NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 37

ZONE OF PEACE AND COOPERATION OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC:

(a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/48/531)

(b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/48/L.25)

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Nigeria to introduce draft resolution A/48/L.25.

Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria): Since 1986, when the General Assembly by a solemn declaration established the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, the international community has continued to give moral and material support towards the realization of the objectives of the zone.

Member States of the zone have, for their part, sought to advance their cause at various meetings, including two high-level meetings of the zone. Recently, they met here in New York to review their cooperation in the light of the new and evolving international situation. They concluded that changing structures and postures in international relations since the end of the cold war had engendered a renewal of confidence in multilateralism. They therefore saw in this new international situation the continuing validity of their regional association as a relevant and viable instrument of multilateral cooperation among them, and as a forum that contributed to the promotion of international peace and security. They issued a declaration in this regard further to reaffirm their commitment to the purposes and objectives of the zone. They also agreed to avail themselves of the structures and competences that already exist in member States in the political, economic, social, humanitarian, environmental and developmental fields.

The full text of that Declaration has been circulated to Member States in document A/48/581 of 9 November 1993. With respect to implementing aspects of the Declaration, it is gratifying to note that a meeting of the zone's ministers of trade and industry will commence in Windhoek, Namibia, in two days' time. We look forward to continuing the implementation of the Declaration when the third high-level meeting of the zone takes place in Brazil in 1994. With a forward-looking perspective, States members of the zone, linked culturally and geographically by the Atlantic Ocean, also plan to negotiate an appropriate instrument on marine protection as a complement to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and as a follow-up to the relevant part of Agenda 21, particularly its chapter 17.

The States members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic consider the prevailing international environment to be particularly propitious for the full cultivation and development of zonal cooperation. In the area of nuclear disarmament, a good prospect for turning the South Atlantic into a nuclear-weapon-free zone is provided by the Argentina-Brazil initiative leading to the full entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which prohibits nuclear weapons in Latin America; and a good prospect for progress towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone on the African continent is

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provided by the imminent conclusion of an appropriate multilateral instrument.

On the political front, the statutory end of apartheid in South Africa can only create further opportunities for unhindered multifaceted cooperation between all countries in the region of the South Atlantic. For that reason, the countries members of the zone look forward with optimism to the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

The aim of the adoption of Agenda 21 at Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 was, *inter alia*, to conserve the environment, the ecological balance and living marine resources. We are therefore pleased to note the expression of the international community's political will further to strengthen cooperation in the conservation and management of living marine resources, as demonstrated during the meetings of the intergovernmental United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks that took place here in New York in July 1993. As an earnest of our intention to contribute to the enabling process, the States of the South Atlantic have considered the possibility of negotiating in the short run an appropriate instrument on marine protection. The intergovernmental United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, to be concluded in 1994, can only ease the way for a regional agenda in that area.

Those are a few of the possibilities and opportunities that States members of the zone would like to capitalize on in order to further the purposes of the zone. But even as we nurture our hopes for peace and progress within the zone, we are saddened by the persisting situations in Angola and in Liberia. The support of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has counted for much in the efforts to end all hostilities in those two countries. We would like to urge the international community not to relent in those efforts, and to continue to provide increased humanitarian assistance until the conflicts in Angola and Liberia are resolved and normalcy returns to the affairs of those two countries.

In introducing the draft resolution contained in document A/48/L.25 on behalf of States members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, I should like to point out that in its preambular paragraphs the draft resolution has drawn substance and language from resolutions 46/19 and 47/74, which were adopted in 1991 and 1992 respectively. The operative part repeats some of last year's operative paragraphs, and also reflects some key developments that took place in 1993, notable among which are the Declaration made at the 1993 ministerial meeting of the zone, held at New York, the progress made in the drafting of a treaty to denuclearize the African continent, the agreement reached between the Governments of Namibia and South Africa on the transfer of Walvis Bay and the offshore islands to Namibia, and the proposal for negotiating an appropriate instrument on marine protection as a complement to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and as a follow-up to Agenda 21.

The draft resolution takes care not to lose sight of issues that have relevance to the achievement of the purposes and objectives of the zone. In that connection, it has taken into particular consideration the various sensitivities and perspectives that lead us to believe that the resulting formulation now enjoys universal consensus.

In that regard, I should like to make an oral revision to the text of the fifth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/48/L.25. Our partners in the European Union have kindly suggested to me that it would perhaps be more felicitous to use the pronoun "it" instead of "that" in that preambular paragraph. I have in turn discussed this monumental change with the other sponsors of the draft resolution, and, in a spirit of cooperation and partnership, they have agreed to accept this modification. Thus, the fifth preambular paragraph should now read as follows:

> "Noting the concern expressed on the use of fishing methods and practices that cause the over-exploitation of living marine resources, especially of highly migratory and straddling fish stocks, and that it has an adverse impact on the conservation and management of living resources of the marine environment, both within and beyond the exclusive economic zones".

The States members of the zone, which are also sponsors of this draft resolution, are delighted to commend it to the General Assembly for adoption without a vote.

Mr. de ARAUJO CASTRO (Brazil): Since its inception seven years ago, the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic has contributed to fostering cooperation and strengthening peace. It represents an important effort to implement joint projects aimed at promoting the well-being of the peoples of the South Atlantic region.

The establishment of the zone of peace and cooperation represented a recognition by the General Assembly of deep-rooted aspirations of countries on both sides of our ocean. Resolution 41/11 provides the basic framework upon which the countries of the region commit themselves to the promotion of peace and security and to

the enhancement of cooperation in economic, environmental and other matters.

The momentous changes in the international scene have created opportunities which the countries of the zone of peace and cooperation intend to pursue with the cooperation of the international community as a whole.

One of the main objectives of the zone of peace and cooperation is the promotion of peace and security. Unfortunately, serious areas of tension continue to exist within our region, putting to risk the future of our African friends and neighbours.

The Brazilian Government is following with great care and attention the evolution of the situation in Angola, a country to which we are linked by very strong ties of friendship and good understanding. We firmly support efforts aimed at bringing about a lasting solution to the conflict, a solution based on the full implementation of the Acordos de Paz and of the resolutions of the Security Council, and on the acceptance of the results of the free and fair democratic elections held last year under United Nations supervision. Brazil looks forward to the day when the Angolan people will be able to enjoy peace, progress and democracy, with the full support of the international community.

The crisis in Liberia has brought great suffering to the people of that African country of the South Atlantic. We welcome and expect the full implementation of the Cotonou Agreement, which brought new hopes for peace to that country. The United Nations must continue to make its important contribution to the efforts undertaken by the African neighbours of Liberia.

On the more positive side, the path towards democracy in South Africa is now irreversible. We are now very close to the definitive eradication of apartheid. The elections scheduled for next year and the recent approval of an interim constitution granting equal rights to all South Africans are clear signals that the courageous people of that South Atlantic country will finally achieve their long-held aspirations for justice and for national reconciliation and reconstruction. We hope that in the very near future we will be able to welcome a democratic, united and free South Africa as a full member of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic.

One of the most important objectives to be pursued within the framework of the zone of peace and cooperation is the denuclearization of the South Atlantic. We are determined to ensure the achievement of the ultimate goal of abolishing once and for all the risk and threat of nuclear weapons from the region of the South Atlantic. A number of initiatives have been advanced in this respect, beginning with the 1964 Declaration of the Organization of African Unity and the 1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco, initiatives designed to advance the commitment of the countries of the region to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

In Africa, considerable progress has been made recently in the drafting of a treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. In Latin America and the Caribbean, important steps have been taken to ensure the effective implementation of the ultimate objective of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The amended text of the Treaty of Tlatelolco is now in the final stages of the process of ratification by States of the region, so as to enable the Treaty to come fully into force.

The Brazilian Government believes that the effectiveness of the existing instruments could be further strengthened by the elaboration and adoption of a treaty on the denuclearization of the South Atlantic region, and we are currently engaged in studying different aspects of this question.

Brazil attaches particular importance to the environmental aspects of cooperation among the South Atlantic countries. Protection of the environment and promotion of sustainable development are goals that have consistently gained support in the South Atlantic region, especially since the Rio Conference of June 1992. We are determined to work towards these goals together with the other members of the zone of peace and cooperation.

In this context, special reference should be made to the work of the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. The Conference represents a unique opportunity to address the problems related to the conservation and management of living resources. We share the perception that these problems should be addressed by the adoption of a regime for the conservation and management of straddling stocks and highly migratory fish stocks embodied in a legally binding instrument which would serve the interests of the international community as a whole. The Brazilian Government is currently proposing the negotiation among the South Atlantic countries of an agreement on marine protection, in implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and as a follow-up to the relevant parts of Agenda 21. We believe that the consideration of this proposal will give renewed momentum to the zone of peace and cooperation in a matter of particular importance for all South Atlantic countries.

The declaration adopted at the Ministerial Meeting of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, which was held in New York on 5 October 1993, constitutes a significant step towards the advancement of the purposes and principles of the zone of peace and cooperation. As we announced during that meeting, Brazil has offered to host the third meeting of States members of the zone of peace and cooperation during the second half of 1994. We are confident that the meeting in Brazil will prove to be an effective opportunity to reaffirm the capacity of the zone to fulfil its potential as regards peace and international cooperation.

The need to foster cooperation among the developing countries of our region and the desire for peace in the South Atlantic were at the basis of the establishment of the zone of peace and cooperation. Today, more than ever, these elements remain at the heart of our collective efforts to promote the objectives that were solemnly proclaimed by this General Assembly on 27 October 1986.

Mr. PIRIZ BALLON (Uruguay) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation endorses the eloquent introduction of draft resolution A/48/L.25 by the Permanent Representative of Nigeria, speaking as coordinator of the members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, and would just like to make a few comments on the zone's significance.

The zone of peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic is important to Uruguay because it is a model instrument for preserving international peace and security and has enormous potential for the future of the post-cold-war world. The zone is also an excellent model for inter-regional cooperation on the basis of legitimate and important interests of developing States that border on the South Atlantic.

The benefits of security and cooperation in this zone could reach beyond the geographical area of the South Atlantic to the whole world. Consider, for example, some of the regional undertakings now under way.

In the area of preservation of the region from the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, the Treaty of Tlatelolco has now become a virtual reality, with the ratification by Argentina and Brazil of the Treaty and its amendments. Both countries participate in a nuclear-materials control and accountability system, having established a Brazilian-Argentine agency for the purpose, and having also signed a quadripartite safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In addition, seven countries in the Latin American region have signed the Mendoza Declaration, expressing our commitment not to develop, store or use chemical or bacteriological weapons.

On the other shore of the Atlantic, considerable progress has been made in bringing to fruition a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa, thus making possible the longstanding aspirations of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. This progress has taken the form of a draft resolution adopted by the First Committee and entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa" (A/C.1/48/L.19), in which the Secretary-General is requested, in consultation with the Organization of African Unity, to finalize the drafting of a treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. In this way, we are establishing all of the conditions that will enable us to achieve our ideal of a nuclear-weapon-free zone that includes both continents.

Concerning the solution of regional conflicts, we look with growing optimism to the positive steps taken towards a permanent solution of the conflicts in Angola and Liberia. In this connection, I should like to point out that the member countries of the zone are making real contributions, in active cooperation with the United Nations and regional bodies, to resolve conflicts that unfortunately persist in the region. This cooperation takes the form of participation in peace-keeping operations or in political processes designed to help resolve existing disputes. For instance, my country is participating in the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), in which we have 20 military observers.

I cannot let this opportunity pass without reaffirming Uruguay's satisfaction with the positive political developments in South Africa. We look forward to the time in the near future when South Africa will be able to become a full member of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic.

As to environmental protection, operative paragraph 7 of the draft resolution before us today deals with the proposal for negotiating an appropriate instrument on marine protection as a complement to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and as a follow-up to the relevant parts of Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. My country enthusiastically supports this initiative and is willing to participate actively in developing it in the appropriate forums.

As was stated in the Declaration of the Ministerial Meeting of the countries of the zone, held in New York last October, the zone has enormous potential for horizontal cooperation and for promoting peace and security in the region. This dual approach arises from our

belief that questions of peace, security and development are interrelated and inseparable, as is recognized in the preambular part of draft resolution A/48/L.25.

The responsibility for attaining the objectives of the zone lies primarily with its member States, but because of their scope these objectives should enjoy the full support of the international community. That is why the sponsors of draft resolution A/48/L.25 urge Member States to adopt it without a vote.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/48/L.25, as orally revised.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen

Against: United States of America

Abstaining: Bahamas

Draft resolution A/48/L.25, as orally revised, was adopted by 103 votes to 1, with 1 abstention (resolution 48/23).*

The PRESIDENT: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. DONLON (United States of America): The United States would like to take this opportunity to explain why we had no alternative to voting once again against the draft resolution on this item. No change has been made to the provisions which we said last year insufficiently addressed one of our major concerns - that of freedom of navigation, now in operative paragraph 8. In view of the territorial claims of some States in the region, the resolution does not adequately protect the freedom of navigation and overflight or the right of passage through international straits and territorial seas, as established under international law.

My Government also remains concerned that the underlying resolution of 1986 purported to create an internationally recognized zone of peace by General Assembly resolution. That concern is not addressed by the current resolution. The United States believes that zones of peace can be created only through multilateral negotiations between the relevant parties. In this case, such negotiations have never taken place.

Our third and final concern is that the resolution refers to a number of issues which, while perhaps not objectionable in themselves - such as developmental assistance and fishing methods - have little to do with the subject at hand.

Mrs. MENDES (Portugal): Portugal supported draft resolution A/48/L.25, which has just been adopted, concerning the zone of peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic.

Portugal has long-standing special relationships with many countries in the region, and we attach great importance to strengthening our links and cooperation with them. We should like to emphasize the importance of providing humanitarian assistance for the countries in the region that are in desperate need of it.

Nevertheless, the resolution continues to present some difficulties for my country, namely with regard to the facts that a clear geographical delimitation of the zone of peace has yet to be established and that the exact nature of the obligations incumbent on the States in question has yet to be defined. We hope that in the future these issues will be addressed.

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 37?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 29 *(continued)*

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

(a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/48/422 and Add.1)

(b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/48/L.27)

The PRESIDENT: Members will recall that the General Assembly held its debate on agenda item 29 at its 60th meeting, held on 22 November.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/48/L.27.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/48/L.27?

Draft resolution A/48/L.27 was adopted (resolution 48/24).

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 29?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 44 *(continued)*

STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/48/536)

Mrs. AL-KHALED (Kuwait) *(interpretation from Arabic):* My delegation wishes to extend its appreciation to Mr. Eliasson, for his efforts in the area of humanitarian emergency assistance.

My delegation has considered the Secretary-General's report (A/48/536), and thanks the Secretary-General for this very informative document. We also wish to reaffirm our unwavering support for him as he tries to coordinate humanitarian emergency assistance.

The international community faces unprecedented challenges in the area of providing humanitarian emergency assistance. In many instances, such assistance is provided under very difficult conditions to the many people throughout the world who have been affected by civil wars and natural disasters. Facilitating the provision of assistance to these suffering people is indeed a very important task.

Since independence, Kuwait has always provided assistance to a number of peoples and countries because of our belief in the principle that assistance should be made available whenever necessary. Despite the bitter tragedy that my country suffered and which almost paralysed its infrastructure, making it impossible for us to live up fully, as we did in the past, to the ideal of applying the principle of providing assistance to those who need it, Kuwait, through official channels at Government level or through informal channels - national organizations and civilian societies - has continued to provide financial assistance and assistance in kind to fraternal and friendly countries.

Kuwait has donated $25 million to Lebanon for those suffering in southern Lebanon from Israeli bombings. We have channelled part of our donations to the rehabilitation of schools and hospitals there. We have also contributed financially - just over $1 million - in order to help those who have been afflicted by the Maharashtra earthquake. In addition, we sent assistance in kind to people who needed it in Bangladesh.

The United Nations is doing a great deal to mitigate the effects of natural disasters. Sometimes, the results of such efforts fall short of expectations, which is understandable. However what is really deplorable is that some of those disasters are man-made and that such man-made disasters which cause such economic and social losses and such human suffering are the handiwork of repressive regimes that trample the most basic of human rights. Kuwait has provided assistance to people in the southern and northern parts of Iraq in cooperation with the Iranian Red Crescent and, in addition, some of our national organizations have provided assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to our brethren in Somalia.

There can be no doubt that the consequences of disasters are devastating for the countries that experience them - especially developing countries, which are particularly affected by disasters because they already face acute economic problems. With respect to the long-term impact of such disasters, it is not just a question of providing emergency assistance; follow-up action must also be taken to ensure those countries' long-term development.

My delegation would repeat what was said by the Secretary-General in his report (A/48/536): namely that the problem of emergency assistance and rehabilitation must be one indivisible whole; that aid must not be incompatible with long-term assistance for development, and that emergency assistance must not make the country

receiving the assistance dependent over the long term on such assistance.

It is important to consolidate cooperation amongst the various United Nations agencies that deal with emergencies so that assistance may be coordinated effectively. If such cooperation is lacking or insufficient, the necessary response to emergency situations will be slow.

My delegation looks forward to the results of the Conference that will be held in Yokohama in May 1994, where policies on dealing with disasters can be further refined.

We appreciate the work accomplished by those providing emergency assistance. It is also very important, however, to deal with man-made disasters. For example, the fratricidal wars in Somali, Bosnia and Herzegovina and in other countries also require that the United Nations face up to these conflicts, because people must not be dragged into wars that bring them even greater suffering at the hands of repressive regimes.

Mrs. FRITSCHE (Liechstenstein): When the Assembly adopted resolution 46/182 in December 1991, few could have predicted the number, magnitude and complexity of humanitarian crises that the United Nations has since had to address.

It is a sad reality that calls for humanitarian assistance have never been as numerous as they are now. In the almost two years since its establishment, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs has faced 108 natural disasters and 26 complex emergency situations.

My delegation would like to pay tribute to the effective leadership of Under-Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and to the efforts he and his team have made to meet these challenges. I would like to reiterate to Mr. Eliasson my Government's complete support and cooperation.

The cost of humanitarian assistance is a necessary burden on the international community. As outlined in the comprehensive report by the Secretary-General (A/48/536), the funds which are at the disposal of the Emergency Relief Coordinator in order to deal with these crises are the result of consolidated inter-agency appeals, special pledging conferences and consultative meetings with donor countries. In addition, the Central Emergency Revolving Fund enables the Emergency Relief Coordinator to respond rapidly to relief requirements. We note with satisfaction that experience with the use of this Fund has been positive and encouraging. However, the financial regulations regarding the operation of the Fund at times make quick disbursements difficult. My delegation therefore encourages the review of these regulations by the Secretary-General. We furthermore wish to underline the desirability of considering the expansion of the Fund's scope, as its utilization has so far been limited to organizations of the United Nations system.

Humanitarian and political issues are often linked, and we believe that humanitarian diplomacy has an important role to play in promoting conditions conducive to political dialogue. Political tensions can be defused through humanitarian assistance, thereby contributing to the promotion of peacefully resolving a conflict.

Access and appropriate conditions for relief organizations are a prerequisite for humanitarian work. Humanitarian diplomacy can also be used to remind States of their responsibility to provide access to populations in need.

Because conflicts within a country often do not stop at its borders, United Nations personnel are more vulnerable than ever. The protection of relief workers is of particular concern to my delegation. Increasingly, humanitarian work is facing difficult security conditions, and, regrettably, at times even protection by military contingents is required. This is a very dangerous and very unsettling trend. Within United Nations agencies, Red Cross organizations and non-governmental organizations, many lives have been lost in tragic incidents. We regret and condemn all actions taken against relief personnel. It is simply unacceptable that humanitarian relief workers should become targets while trying to help others.

Humanitarian assistance is often hampered by the presence of land mines. The removal of these mines is now part of humanitarian relief assistance, in cooperation with the respective United Nations peace-keeping presence. We note with satisfaction that this particular problem has been addressed by the General Assembly, and we welcome resolution 48/7 regarding assistance in mine clearing.

Humanitarian relief work must be adapted to the environment. In times of war, environmental considerations regrettably pale into insignificance. It is understandable, of course, that under such circumstances, priorities change, as the population concerned has to deal with more pressing problems. It should therefore be of particular concern to humanitarian relief agencies to try to keep possible environmental damage to the absolute minimum.

The problem of ethnic and religious strife, which often results in internal conflicts or even civil wars, is also of particular significance to humanitarian emergencies.

Instead of dealing with the symptoms, we must attack the root causes themselves. We believe that a new approach to dealing with this type of situation is urgently needed. If we look at the challenges the United Nations is facing in this field, it becomes evident that preventive diplomacy through confidence-building measures, fact-finding missions and - especially in the context of humanitarian assistance - through early warning, is a most timely concept.

The United Nations has ensured effective and timely assistance in many instances, but much remains to be done. This can only be achieved through shared responsibility by Member States.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): Since its inception, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs has had the most challenging task of dealing with a plethora of emergencies in the form of both man-made and natural disasters. These emergencies overstretched the capacities of the newly formed Department even before it could prepare itself from an organizational viewpoint to deal with the complexities of each disaster systematically and in accordance with its mandate. Despite the multifarious demands, the Emergency Relief Coordinator and his Department have responded to emergencies in a dedicated manner. The Department's overall coordinating role has been evident in all international emergency situations.

The Pakistan delegation would especially like to express its appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Jan Eliasson for his commitment and perseverance. No one can better understand the Department's overall objectives and the magnitude of its tasks than can Mr. Eliasson, who chaired the working group that elaborated the specific structures and the role of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

It was generally acknowledged that there was a need to rectify the piecemeal and sporadic manner in which emergencies had been dealt with in the past by the international community, both by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. It was widely accepted that the United Nations system had a responsibility to act rapidly wherever an emergency occurred. It was this urgent need for a United Nations coordinating mechanism to provide policy guidance and develop strategies for dealing with emergencies in any part of the world that led to the creation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. As envisaged in resolution 46/182, the Department must have a recognized leadership role in emergencies and, for this purpose, the full confidence of the United Nations and non-governmental agencies involved in such emergencies.

The proliferation of emergencies over the past few years, especially man-made disasters caused by war and civil strife, underscores the importance of the role which the United Nations must play in preventive diplomacy and socio-economic development. We are convinced that some of the present-day political disasters could have been averted if there had been greater resort to the instruments of negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement envisaged in Chapter VI of the Charter.

Undoubtedly, the United Nations faces "a crisis of excessive expectations", but it is the only organization that can offer hope to nations and peoples locked in strife and overcome by turmoil. It must again be emphasized that it is through sincere implementation of the decisions of the United Nations, especially the resolutions of the Security Council, that we can expect, in the words of the Charter, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and thus fulfil the primary purpose for which the United Nations was established. Certainly, the tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina could have been avoided if the world community had not tolerated the flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions by the aggressor and if the Council had taken more vigorous action to implement its own resolutions.

The humanitarian situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues, with the onset of winter, to deteriorate. This is an example of a complex emergency in which the role of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in coordinating international help for the Bosnian people will be critical to their survival. The people of that unfortunate nation look to the United Nations to keep open the channels of sustenance by means of relief convoys and airlifted supplies.

The chaos and turmoil that have affected so many parts of the developing world in recent years also underline the vital importance of promoting economic and social development as a means of averting humanitarian emergencies and also of overcoming such calamities when they happen. The volume of emergency assistance has increased, since 1991, from approximately $700 million to over $3 billion. However, most of these resources represent a diversion from development assistance. Without development, there is a danger that civil order and peace will disappear in many parts of the world; without development, many of the current emergencies may become even more prolonged and cruel.

The reason for creating the Department of Humanitarian Affairs was to ensure the coordination of assistance from all organizations involved in emergencies. The Department's activities will have to be promoted in

conformity with the guiding principles contained in the annex to resolution 46/182. As Baroness Chalker of the United Kingdom observed, the Department was not formed to act on the ground in an emergency, but to ensure that, working together, the United Nations agencies delivered the relief so sorely needed. This coordination role can be enhanced through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. That Committee, chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, should serve as the primary, action-oriented mechanism for inter-agency coordination of policy issues relating to humanitarian assistance and for the formulation of a coherent and timely United Nations response to major complex emergencies.

With regard to the field level, resolution 46/182 identifies the role of the Resident Coordinator as that of coordination of humanitarian assistance activities. The Resident Coordinator's effectiveness in performing this specific function can be assured by the strengthening of his role and relationship with respect to emergency relief organizations in the field. With fragmented and uncoordinated activities by specific sectoral agencies without the overall coordination of the Resident Coordinator it would be difficult to achieve the purposes for which the Department was conceived. Under strong leadership, all agencies can be expected to ensure a coherent and coordinated response in an emergency. It is only through the strengthened role of the Resident Coordinator that prevention through development can be assured.

Since its launching, the Central Emergency Revolving Fund has been a vital mechanism for the provision of immediate financial assistance for emergencies pending the preparation of, and response to, a consolidated appeal. It is therefore essential that the Fund should continue to receive contributions and retain its revolving nature. The Emergency Relief Coordinator should be allowed complete flexibility in the disbursement of the Fund's resources for effective damage control in the first 48 hours of an emergency, which is when most lives are lost. The Secretary-General's concern about the non-availability of resources for implementing agencies and about the delay caused in the preparation of consolidated appeals leading to a liquidity crisis is certainly legitimate and needs to be carefully considered, taking into account the principles underlying a consolidated appeal as enunciated in resolution 46/182.

The role of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs as a focal point for policy coordination and resource mobilization for determining programmes is essential in ensuring the delivery of humanitarian assistance in conflict and post-conflict situations. This role is of great interest to Pakistan. Most countries affected by the problem of uncleared minefields lack the expertise required to clear and neutralize unexploded mines. United Nations agencies can be of immense help by setting up institutional mechanisms for the exchange of information and know-how as well as in the training of personnel in mine-clearance techniques. We understand that the Department's coordination activities are relevant in areas where mine-clearance is essential for the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

My delegation fully shares the Secretary-General's concerns about the security of personnel engaged in humanitarian activities. The continued violence against those involved in both peace-keeping and humanitarian functions must be strongly deplored. Attacks against United Nations personnel and aid workers are outrageous and constitute serious violations of international humanitarian law. Those who have lost their lives or who have been wounded in trying to bring hope for survival to those living under siege or in hunger cannot be forgotten by the international community.

We agree with the Secretary-General that both short- and long-term strategies need to be considered to enhance the security and safety of personnel involved in peace-keeping and humanitarian operations. Theirs is a noble task, critical for the saving of human lives in an international climate of recurrent and widespread regional conflicts and crises. Notwithstanding the dangers inherent in their occupation, they continue their work with courageous commitment.

To conclude, my delegation would like to express its full support for the work done by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs under the leadership of Under-Secretary-General Jan Eliasson. Needless to say, the success of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs could not have been achieved except for the strong commitment and political backing of the Secretary-General. We fully concur with Ambassador Albright that the leadership of the Secretary-General will determine whether the United Nations system provides a smoothly coordinated response to humanitarian crises.

Mr. SELOMA (Botswana): We wish to pay a special tribute to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and all organs of the United Nations system for a job well done in providing a coordinated response to the drought emergency situation in southern Africa. Botswana is one of the countries gripped by the drought that has been ravaging the subregion since last year. The timely, coordinated and coherent response of the Department has demonstrated the validity of General Assembly resolution 46/182. It has been proved that the leadership role of the Department is

absolutely vital for the development of effective mechanisms to respond to all emergency situations.

With the assistance of the United Nations, the emergency drought situation that paralysed the countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) met with a generous response and support which helped avert a near disaster. Out of this collaboration, Botswana has been able to strengthen its policies regarding future responses to drought, the main thrust of which is the incorporation of drought preparedness into regular long-term development programmes. It is encouraging to note that the Department of Humanitarian Affairs has demonstrated its intention to continue collaborating with us in designing and strengthening policies for disaster prevention and preparedness.

The drought situation in my country seems likely to remain the same for the foreseeable future. Earlier this year, we carried out a thorough analysis of the extent and impact of the drought, and the results indicate that the situation is not likely to improve in the near future. The international community is no doubt aware that Botswana has a long history of erratic rainfall. This year again the country is experiencing deficient rainfalls. We are at present well into the rainy season but there is no indication that the spell will be broken.

Most unfortunately, a large part of the population relies predominantly on agriculture. Close to 80 per cent depend on both pastoral and arable farming. The generally deficient rainfall experienced this season has resulted in less hectarage being ploughed than usual. Output is below normal. The consequence has been food shortages throughout the country. As a result, on 27 July 1993, His Excellency the President, Sir Ketumile Masire, declared a nation-wide drought emergency for the 1993 to 1994 season, and appealed to the international community for assistance. The widespread crop failure has significantly eroded incomes based on arable agriculture, on which the majority of our people depend. There is therefore an absolute necessity for the international community to come to our rescue and once again help combat the drought situation. The volume of financial and other resources for assistance needs to be increased. In addition, we call upon the United Nations to channel additional resources to the agencies currently involved in helping the country cope with the emergency situation.

Mrs. DA CRUZ (Angola) (*interpretation from French*): I wish first of all, to express my delegation's appreciation for the Secretary-General's report on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations and to congratulate Under-Secretary-General Jan Eliasson on the excellent presentation of the document.

Indeed, the resurgence of armed conflicts and natural disasters which affect vast regions of our planet and millions of human beings bespeak the need to increase humanitarian aid and enhance its effectiveness in order to make the best and most rational use of the resources made available by the international community.

In adopting resolution 46/182 the General Assembly responded to an urgent need and established coordination instruments which, according to the Secretary-General's report, "have proved to be essential and useful" (*A/48/536, para. 1*). In the specific case of Angola, the establishment by resolution 46/182 of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) has contributed to the rapid implementation of important decisions designed to mitigate the difficult and complex humanitarian situation in which the country finds itself at the present.

The humanitarian situation in Angola has seriously deteriorated because of the resumption of the war by the UNITA rebels in October 1992, which devastated huge productive zones and destroyed social infrastructures, displacing 3 million Angolans from their homes and depriving them of all their property and of health services and lodging.

The economic and financial situation of my country, emerging from a violent and prolonged war which has lasted for more than 30 years, is weak; the Government is not in a position to tackle on its own the resumption of production activities and the social reintegration of displaced persons. In this effort, it is counting on the generous support of the international community, particularly the United Nations agencies - the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Health Organization (WHO) - the non-governmental organizations and several Governments. On behalf of the Republic of Angola, my delegation thanks all these organizations most sincerely for their expressions of human solidarity.

We note in the report of the Secretary-General that, despite the generosity of the international community, the contributions received up to now in response to the United Nations appeal for humanitarian assistance to Angola is still far from satisfactory, meeting only 20.37 per cent of the needs. We therefore encourage the IASC to study new financing machinery and new strategies for the

mobilization of resources for humanitarian-assistance programmes. We request that the General Assembly give positive consideration to the proposal for an increase in and expansion of the participation of other international organizations in the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF) established by resolution 46/182.

The prolonged drought that struck the southern part of Africa in 1991 and 1992, compounded by the effects of the war that has been destabilizing the countries of the region in recent years, posed a great challenge to the coordinating capabilities of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and to cooperation between the various operational agencies in effectively meeting the crisis. Thanks to that joint effort and the generous support of the international community, which quickly responded to the United Nations appeal, and to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the contributions of the region's Governments, it was possible to avoid what could have been one of the continent's greatest famine crises.

In this connection, preventive measures must be taken, through the establishment and strengthening at national and regional levels of structures capable of taking action in the most vulnerable areas. The Yokohama World Conference will afford an opportunity for a more in-depth study of future measures to reduce the impact of such catastrophes.

The security of the personnel and *matériel* involved in emergency operations is fundamentally necessary to guarantee that such aid reaches those who need it. Armed attacks on humanitarian assistance teams must be strongly condemned and their authors held responsible. This question is particularly sensitive for my country, in view of the armed attacks by the UNITA rebels against United Nations teams, the diversion in July of a World Food Programme aeroplane on a humanitarian mission in Uige Province and the attack against a convoy of vehicles transporting foodstuffs and medicine intended for displaced persons in Benguela Province in August. Mines along lines of communication are a further obstacle to the distribution of humanitarian assistance.

The development of demining programmes like those employed in recent years in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Mozambique must be expanded to include the Republic of Angola. We call upon the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to make efforts to that end.

Mr. SOH (Republic of Korea): Humanitarian assistance is an area that has gained prominence in the post-cold-war era. It is a clear way for humanity to express its desire for peace and stability. The delegation of the Republic of Korea supports the humanitarian assistance activities of the United Nations and other related organizations.

In my delegation's view, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs has been ably fulfilling its mandate in the coordination of responses to an increasing number of complex emergencies and natural disasters. Through the establishment of institutional arrangements and the strengthening of such financial mechanisms as the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF) and consolidated appeals, the Department strengthened the foundation for work in the field of humanitarian aid. My delegation supports the agreed conclusions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session last July, and believes that every effort should be made towards their full implementation.

My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the Secretariat for the well-documented progress report (A/48/536), which contains useful information on humanitarian emergency assistance. My delegation would like to make some comments on that report.

The first comment relates to the coordination between emergency-assistance organizations. Given the fact that emergency situations keep growing without adequate resources to cope with them, increased efficiency is the key. Coordination can help to provide efficiency and accountability in emergency assistance operations. Therefore, the leadership and responsibility of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, as the coordinating organ, should be further strengthened and the role of each operational organization clarified. Inter-departmental coordination between United Nations political, peace-keeping and humanitarian activities is also important. My delegation pays special attention to the inter-departmental coordination described in the report, which took place during the involvement of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in United Nations fact-finding missions to Somalia, Liberia and Rwanda. Field-level coordination between the Resident Coordinator and the Disaster Management Team should also be reinforced or, where necessary, established to ensure a timely response to emergency situations, particularly cases of complex emergencies.

Next, my delegation agrees that the approach of linking humanitarian assistance to development will result in the effective performance of these activities. In this regard, the concept of a continuum for humanitarian aid, extending from relief to development, has come to the fore. National efforts are needed to facilitate all aspects of this continuum. My delegation welcomes the efforts of the Secretariat to elaborate the continuum concept in the forthcoming agenda for development. My delegation was pleased to learn from the recent letter of Mr. James Speth,

A ..inistrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), that the UNDP is undertaking an in-depth study on the theme of the continuum through a group of highly qualified consultants. My delegation welcomes that initiative and suggests that, if possible, more consultants from developing countries be included in the group.

My delegation welcomes the decision of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to establish a task force to develop policy recommendations concerning the continuum. The report notes that the World Bank, UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) considered this issue and took action in a number of emergency situations to integrate rehabilitation activities into humanitarian activities. That approach should be further strengthened and expanded in the activities of other relevant organizations. The suggested setting up of a specific fund to finance the continuum could be considered after the policy recommendations of the task force have been put forward and studied.

The next issue that my delegation considers to be very important is the safety of relief personnel. Such personnel, who often work in unstable and hazardous circumstances, deserve our highest praise as well as care. The death of relief personnel in the line of duty is particularly tragic. Acts of violence against relief personnel must be wholly condemned, and action must be taken to secure the safety of relief personnel. My delegation wishes to refer to the Final Declaration adopted at the International Conference for the Protection of Victims of War, held in Geneva from 31 August to 1 September 1993, which urges, among other things, that necessary measures be taken at the national, regional and international levels to secure the safety of relief personnel. My delegation also welcomes the consideration by the Sixth Committee of the legal aspects of the security of those engaged in peace missions, including humanitarian relief assistance.

In this context, my delegation agrees that the virtually ubiquitous presence of mines poses a direct and great threat in most of the areas where relief personnel operate. The presence of mines not only threatens relief workers but also hampers the resettlement of displaced persons and the resumption of normal life. As we believe that mine clearance is a critical issue that should be given priority, my delegation co-sponsored the resolution on mine clearance that was adopted on 19 October. My delegation advocates the inclusion of mine clearance in consolidated appeals for countries with mine-pollution problems.

Turning now to the management of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund, I should like to say that my delegation is encouraged to learn of the Fund's positive impact. We hope that it will continue to have a solid financial foundation and that it will, indeed, be utilized by the operational organizations of the United Nations system. On the basis of the experiences of the past year, we believe that the management of the Fund should be improved. Accordingly, we support in general the flexibility that is proposed in the report.

Finally, my delegation supports the view of the Economic and Social Council that the Department of Humanitarian Affairs should be provided with regular budget staff and administrative resources commensurate with its responsibilities. The humanitarian crises in the world are increasing in number, in magnitude and in complexity. According to the report, the United Nations is involved in 26 countries, trying, with an appeals aggregate of $4.6 billion, to meet the needs of approximately 58.5 million people. Given these overwhelming figures, the United Nations must be provided with the means to discharge its responsibilities effectively.

With regard to the strengthening of the staff of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, there is a need for further expansion in the area of secondment from intergovernmental organizations, national agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Mr. GHAFOORZAI (Afghanistan): I should like to express to the Secretary-General our appreciation of his comprehensive and informative report contained in document A/48/536 and of his continuing interest in the provision of assistance to Afghanistan.

I should like also to commend the work of Mr. Jan Eliasson, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, in bringing the dire humanitarian and economic needs of Afghanistan to light and in launching a number of appeals to meet the immediate needs of our war-torn country.

The Department of Humanitarian Affairs, as the United Nations system's focal point for humanitarian concerns, has provided adequate emergency humanitarian assistance to needy countries. My delegation is more than encouraged by the fact that a number of positive steps have been taken through the implementation of resolutions 46/182 and 47/168, both of which are entitled "Strengthening . of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations".

Furthermore, we commend the current efforts to provide special programmes of economic assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia, Sudan, Angola and Nicaragua, as well as my own country - Afghanistan - and the strengthening of international cooperation and coordination to mitigate and minimize the consequences of Chernobyl and other major disasters. Regrettably, however, there has so far been an unsympathetic response to the three consecutive consolidated inter-agency appeals for emergency assistance for Afghanistan launched by the Secretary-General since 5 June 1992.

The delegation of the Islamic State of Afghanistan believes that there is a direct link between, on one hand, peace and prosperity, which are among the main objectives of the United Nations Charter, and, on the other hand, emergency humanitarian assistance for countries in need. When a nation or a region is faced with a sudden man-made or natural disaster, that unforeseen situation gives rise to the potential for instability.

The inescapable link between humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping is addressed clearly in the Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Peace", which was published last year as document A/47/277. We also support fully the reference, in paragraph 108 of the Secretary-General's report, to the emphasis on the fact that the continuum from relief to rehabilitation and development is a fundamental principle of a coordinated multilateral response to humanitarian emergencies.

The provision of emergency humanitarian assistance to needy peoples around the globe is not just an obligation but a sacred humanitarian mission. As the United States Ambassador rightly said in the course of her statement during the debate on this item, what is at stake is life or death for blameless children, grandparents, mothers and fathers. Truly, their fate depends upon our choice.

We commend the financial and technical assistance provided by the United States, as well as by Japan, to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, and we encourage others to follow the example of those two countries.

Political conflicts may eventually find solutions, and the need for programmes of economic development may diminish. However, there will always be a need for emergency humanitarian assistance to mitigate the consequences of natural or man-made calamities. That being the case, it is the view of my delegation that the Department of Humanitarian Affairs should continue its mission and should be equipped with a modern information system encompassing all emergency requirements.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan is the inheritor of an unprecedented crisis. To illustrate the situation in my country, I shall quote from the Secretary-General's appeal of 5 June 1992:

> "Few countries in history have suffered to the extent Afghanistan has over the past 14 years. Aside from the physical destruction, which was often nothing short of cataclysmic, the results of the war include over a million people killed, over two million disabled, nearly six million refugees in neighbouring countries and two million internally displaced persons."

The Government of Afghanistan, with extremely limited and scarce resources, faces the major task of rebuilding a country whose economic and social infrastructure is totally destroyed. As is mentioned in paragraph 139 of the Secretary-General's report, the creation of conditions for peace and a stable environment in complex emergency situations is an immense task. Efforts have to be made to alleviate the major problems with which we are confronted. The restoration of social and other basic services - for example, transport, communications, roads, health provision, education, housing and shelter, electricity, water and sanitation - is what we are primarily concerned about.

Moreover, we must ensure and facilitate the smooth process of demobilization following the armed conflict and reintegrate refugees and displaced persons into society and provide them with opportunities to engage in normal productive activities. The availability of international assistance to Afghanistan is a prerequisite for any practical step towards accomplishing these objectives.

In my country - Afghanistan - the repatriation of refugees is an immense task in its own right. In addition, however, there is the fact that millions of land-mines greet these people as they return to their homes. This inflates the death toll and adds to the already-crippling number of disabled people.

Mr. Pursoo (Grenada), Vice-President, took the Chair.

While having studied existing practical strategies towards the implementation of humanitarian assistance in disaster-stricken regions, we, in line with the observations of Under-Secretary-General Mr. Jan Eliasson, believe that additional resources are urgently needed. Further, we must continue to do our utmost to achieve a measurable degree of success in reducing the incidence of natural disasters by the end of the century. We also believe that the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), blessed with varied expertise, could play a pivotal role in mitigating disaster emergencies whether caused by nature or man made.

The appeal of the Secretary-General of 5 June 1992 was for $179.7 million. Months elapsed and only $59 million was donated in contributions in cash or in kind. Mr. Jan Eliasson last year also made an urgent request for a winter emergency fund of $17.6 million, a request that was not adequately responded to.

While that life-saving assistance is slow in coming the Under-Secretary-General recently renewed his appeal for a further approximately $60 million to cover the emergency needs of Afghanistan.

The Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Jan Eliasson, and the people of Afghanistan are hopeful that the international community, especially the donor nations, will donate sympathetically and generously.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan, while emphasizing the smooth continuum from relief to development, continues to make every effort to improve the security situation in both Kabul and the provinces, thus allowing international emergency assistance to reach the needy areas.

As indicated by the Under-Secretary-General's statement of 16 November 1993, in spite of the occasional security problems in Kabul and some other areas between January and September 1993, the United Nations agencies, supported by non-governmental organizations and coordinated by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA), reported substantial progress in the major fields of activity. As stated by Mr. Eliasson, the humanitarian and rehabilitation programmes could have achieved even more if additional funds had been made available.

To give an immediate added impetus to this development process the UNDP between November 1992 and June 1993 prepared an Action Plan for the immediate rehabilitation of Afghanistan. The Action Plan, which has already been approved by the Islamic State of Afghanistan, is now published and is available for donors. We believe this is an important step towards effectively addressing the immediate relief, rehabilitation and development needs of war-stricken Afghanistan.

Let me refer to another critical problem, namely, the presence of land mines in my country, a man-made disaster and one of the most serious barriers to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, the return of refugees, the resettlement of displaced persons and the resumption of normal life in the country.

According to the consolidated inter-agency appeal for humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan, since the inception of the mine-clearing programme in 1990 about 68,000 mines and unexploded ordnance have been destroyed from 29 square kilometres of land. Moreover, the report asserts that if a further 50 square kilometres were cleared most people in Afghanistan could resume a normal productive life. In the view of my delegation the statistical analysis does not seem to be based on the reality of the situation. The presence of mines in Afghanistan in the past has been well documented and reported in the various media, including United Nations-related agencies. It is clearly estimated that well over 10 million mines were planted in Afghan soil.

To point out only one simple fact about the magnitude of the spectre of mines in Afghanistan, an eyewitness who recently returned from Kandahar, which is a southern province of Afghanistan, said that three months ago in the Shahr-i-Naw district of Kandahar two children who were repatriated to their homeland were brutally blown up by the mines that were planted in their homes years ago. So the presence of mines not only threatens the agricultural infrastructure, the traditional productive economic sector of the country, but also endangers human life even in some residential areas.

According to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, which administers regular humanitarian programmes in Afghanistan, including mine clearing, the current Afghanistan mine-clearing projects would require $15 million. Unfortunately, only a very modest amount has been donated for the mine-clearing projects currently under way in Afghanistan.

In conclusion, I should like once again to express the appreciation of the people and the Government of Afghanistan to all those who have thus far helped us, and we urge others to come forward. We firmly believe that providing immediate international assistance to Afghanistan will have an important impact on the success of the implementation of the reconstruction and rehabilitation process.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

I should like to inform members that the Assembly will consider a draft resolution to be submitted under agenda item 44 at a later date to be announced in the *Journal*.

AGENDA ITEM 41

EMERGENCY INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR PEACE, NORMALCY AND RECONSTRUCTION OF WAR-STRICKEN AFGHANISTAN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL (A/48/323 and Add.l)

The PRESIDENT: Members will recall that at its 3rd plenary meeting, held on 24 September, the Assembly decided that this agenda item would be allocated to the Second Committee on the understanding that it would be introduced in plenary meeting and considered in the Second Committee.

I now call on the representative of Afghanistan, who will introduce agenda item 41 in the course of his statement.

Mr. GHAFOORZAI (Afghanistan): For the first time last year, at the forty-seventh session, the General Assembly included in its programme of work agenda item 141, entitled "Emergency international assistance for the reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan". That agenda item, as vindicated by its title, was considered and subsequently a resolution that refers to the acute needs of the people of Afghanistan, containing specific measures towards ensuring international assistance, was adopted unanimously. The people of Afghanistan who, during the past 14 years, suffered a war of attrition as a result of the former Soviet Union's aggression, made tremendous human and material sacrifices in the name of Islamic ideals, national pride and integrity. The unanimous adoption of the resolution on the item was seen by the Afghan nation not only as a step forward in the right direction but also as a harbinger of relief from the long years of pain and suffering of the Afghan nation.

Afghanistan, which in its struggle for freedom against the former Soviet Union lost 1.7 million of its population, with over 2 million others disabled, has the right to claim that it made a great contribution to the ending of world bipolarity and of the cold war, and to the collapse of Soviet communism - a mission for the achievement of which the West and the international community were prepared to spend hundreds of billion of dollars.

Certainly, the achievement of those goals was not easy. When the war finally ended in Afghanistan about a year ago the Afghan people expected the free world, and especially this Organization, in appreciation of their great sacrifices, to extend the required humanitarian assistance for the immediate needs of the Afghan people and to provide financial and technical assistance in their post-war struggle for reconstruction.

Since the establishment of the Islamic State, over 2 million Afghan refugees have managed to return to their homeland. These returnees, with the bare minimum of resources at their disposal, have started to rebuild their demolished homes. However, without outside support they cannot and will not be able to restore what is often termed normalcy in life. Before the war ended there was a lot of talk by the United Nations and related agencies, especially by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), about the relief measures taken towards the repatriation and eventual resettlement of Afghans in exile. In reality, the steps taken towards that end have been inadequate, although the efforts of the UNHCR, within its available resources, have been commendable.

Despite the sad plight of the Afghan people, I would point out that during the past year the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has developed a strategy for assessing the rehabilitation and reconstruction needs of Afghanistan. This strategy, which has now been published and is available to donors, estimates the relief and rehabilitation needs of Afghanistan for the next two years to be approximately $600 million. We consider the preparation of this strategy as a positive step towards the rehabilitation process, and we are thankful for it.

In addition to these facts, the United Nations was given a mandate by resolution 47/119 to dispatch a special assessment team to Afghanistan in order to report on the war damages. Also, an international pledging conference was called for with the aim of raising funds for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan. The assessment team was never sent to Afghanistan; nor were arrangements made for the convening of the international pledging conference.

Our dissatisfaction at the limited response to the three inter-agency consolidated appeals of the Secretary-General for emergency humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and at the limited United Nations action towards the implementation of last year's General Assembly resolution should not be construed as a lack of appreciation for the sympathetic endeavours of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Mr. Sotirios Mousouris. We greatly value the efforts exerted and services rendered by Office of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan and Pakistan (OSGAP) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA).

Rather, our dissatisfaction is associated with an awareness of the lack of adequate enthusiasm on the part of donor countries for coming up with generous contributions in support of the rehabilitation process in my country, Afghanistan. Instead they have raised the question of having an adequate security situation as a prerequisite for their provision of relief and rehabilitation assistance to Afghanistan. Granting that security is important for a full-fledged reconstruction programme, I would suggest that a reasonable degree of peace and security does indeed exist in large parts of Afghanistan. In those areas, reconstruction is possible and, if started, could serve as a catalyst in revitalizing the entire Afghan economy. We should also bear in mind that it may not be possible to have full peace and security in the country unless we are able to start the process of reconstruction and to provide the people with productive economic opportunities to make it attractive, and indeed possible, for them to give up their weapons.

The vicious circle of "first security, then reconstruction" or "first economic revival, then security" must be broken if we are to make any progress. In fact, the brighter prospects for military and political security in Kabul have been best indicated by the Secretary-General's statement of 10 November 1993, in which he said:

> "In spite of occasional security problems in Kabul and some other areas between January and September 1993, the United Nations agencies, supported by non-governmental organizations and coordinated by UNOCHA, reported substantial progress in their major fields of activity".

The Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Jan Eliasson, has also asserted that the humanitarian and rehabilitation programmes could have achieved even more if additional funds had been available. Based on those observations, we ask the international community, the United Nations, and especially the donor nations not to be possessed by the blind rationale of the security dilemma in Afghanistan. Rather, they should be open-minded and far-sighted in their approach to the relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

In response to those who condition their granting of assistance to Afghanistan on the creation of favourable security and political circumstances, I am obliged to make the following observation based on some historical realities: The international community has to realize that the aim of the former Soviet Union's military aggression in Afghanistan was not only to place and keep in power a pro-Moscow regime in Kabul: that aggression, which had no parallel in modern history, was part and parcel of international communism's aggressive design - initiated at the beginning of this century - to crush the countries of Central Asia one by one.

Carrying out that design in an Islamic and traditionalist society such as Afghanistan required the destruction and erasing of all values which were in contradiction to Communist philosophy. The first step towards the implementation of this design was the destruction of all our political, social, cultural and religious institutions. In order to weaken the national struggle and *jihad* of the Afghan nation, they resorted to dividing our rank and file, and they fanned the flames of ethnic, religious and linguistic differences. As a result, the national rapproachment and the conciliation, balance and understanding that for many centuries had existed between the various groups were badly affected. As a consequence, one indoctrinated brother took up arms against his countryman.

I mention this historical background as one of the contributing factors to some sporadic skirmishes in and around Kabul in order to draw the attention of the Assembly to the fact that these incidents, a consequence of such a prolonged war, may take time to overcome. However, in spite of the enormous economic problems and the unpleasant events during the last year, which have hampered some of the Government's efforts at further consolidation of security and normalcy in the country, important steps have been taken towards the evolution of the political process.

Our experience in the past year has led to the conclusion that in order to ensure the carrying out of the national programme of reconstruction Afghanistan requires international assistance, which as I stated earlier is in turn subject to the availability of adequate, relative peace and security.

On the other hand, in the light of the complicated factors, causing instability and insecurity - which in certain cases go beyond our boundaries - the objective, which is to bring about peace and stability, cannot be achieved without regional and international assistance and cooperation. To ensure such international and regional political assistance conducive to the creation of a sound regional atmosphere in which the reconstruction programme could be implemented, Afghanistan amended the title of the item to include normalcy and peace as one of the objectives of the resolution.

It is the expectation of the people and Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan that the following steps will be taken by this Organization.

First, Afghanistan would like the United Nations, as a neutral party, to get involved in providing practical assistance to ensure peace, normalcy and reconstruction. Moreover, because of some security considerations, it has unfortunately been the case that the United Nations, especially in the past year, has not been stationed in our country, but rather has been operating from the United Nations Office in Islamabad. In spite of valuable services, rendered by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA) and the Office of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan and Pakistan (OSGAP), there seems to be a lack of adequate awareness and understanding of the reality of the situation in my country. This state of affairs has brought about a stalemate in the availability of international assistance for Afghanistan.

In order to break this stalemate, the Government of Afghanistan believes that it is necessary for the United Nations to obtain first-hand information on the reality of the circumstances in the country. Accordingly, we propose that a United Nations special mission be immediately dispatched to Afghanistan for the following purposes: to solicit the views of the Afghans on how the United Nations, along with the Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, can best facilitate national *rapprochement* and reconciliation; and to report to the Secretary-General the mission's findings, conclusions and recommendations for further action to be taken by the United Nations to assist Afghanistan in achieving complete peace, normalcy and reconstruction.

Secondly, the Islamic State of Afghanistan is planning to convene, in 1994, a general, free and fair election in the country, or a *Loya Jirga*, which is a traditional grand national assembly composed of the elected representatives of the different strata of the Afghan society. I am pleased to announce that there is a national consensus among the Afghan leaders on the convening of a national gathering that will decide the political future of the country. The Islamic State of Afghanistan has extended an invitation to the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the United Nations to supervise such a gathering.

In extending that invitation, I have the duty to echo the cries of millions of victims of war and their laments as parents, orphans and widows whose expectations are pinned upon this Organization and the international community. The adoption of effective and practical measures by this Organization will assure the Afghan nation that they are not forgotten by the world community. It would also demonstrate that the international community is ready to assist Afghanistan, thus enabling it to serve once again as a positive element of peace and stability in the region.

Let us remember the provisions of the Charter to which we all adhere, whose purposes and principles include international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights. It is the practical assistance of the Members of this world family that could enable the Afghan people to realize and enjoy their basic right to the better living standard of which they are now deprived.

The PRESIDENT: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 41.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.